



POEMS BY  
JOHN KEATS



Maiseal

## JOHN KEATS

From an engraving by Henry Merger, after Joseph Severn

POEMS  
BY  
JOHN KEATS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY  
ALICE MEYNELL

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intellectual poet His taste went wrong, apparently, under the influence of such "poetry" as that of Leigh Hunt's "Rimini", and he improved much upon all the characteristics of this wretched model Rising from all this "pulp"—he himself loves the word—he was yet able to strengthen his mind to such splendid action as that of these great Odes and the Chapman Sonnet The feat is a great one

English literature has in this little room "infinite riches" indeed To be without these immortal poems would be to have missed some singular glory of poetry We should have been irretrievably a poorer nation Keats in his supreme passages is intensely poetic Matthew Arnold calls such remote, magical, and exalted quality "Celtic". There is nothing more English—it has been the very spirit of English poetry in all centuries

John Keats was born in 1795 Relinquishing early the profession of surgery, he began to write, and fell amongst friends kind and literary, and the only ones of that character, no doubt, to be had At any rate, they lent him books His first volume was cruelly

*treated by Gifford in the "Quarterly Review", but he would evidently have borne that punishment with dignity and courage had his health held good. Consumption seized him, and he died in Rome, and was buried there, in 1821.*

*ALICE MEYNELL.*

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## The Forest Shrine

FROM "ENDYMION"

Upon the sides of Latmos was outspread  
A mighty forest; for the moist earth fed  
So plenteously all weed-hidden roots  
Into o'erhanging boughs, and precious  
fruits.

And it had gloomy shades, sequester'd  
deep,

Where no man went; and if from shepherd's keep

A lamb stray'd far a-down those inmost  
glens,

Never again saw he the happy pens

Whither his brethren, bleating with content,

Over the hills at every night-fall went.

Among the shepherds 't was believed ever,  
That not one fleecy lamb which thus did  
sever

From the white flock, but pass'd un-  
worried

## THE FOREST SHRINE

By any wolf, or pard with prying head, '   
Until it came to some unfooted plains   
Where fed the herds\* of Pan: ay, great   
    his gains   
Who thus one lamb did lose. Paths there   
    were many,   
Winding through palmy fern, and rushes   
    fenny,   
And ivy banks; all leading pleasantly   
To a wide lawn, whence one could only,   
    see   
Stems thronging all around between the   
    swell   
Of tuft and slanting branches: who could   
    tell   
The freshness of the space of heaven   
    above,   
Edged round with dark tree-tops? through   
    which a dove   
Would often beat its wings, and often   
    too   
A little cloud would move across the blue.

Full in the middle of this pleasantness   
There stood a marble altar, with a tress   
Of flowers budded newly; and the dew   
Had taken fairy phantasies to strew   
Daisies upon the sacred sward last eve,   
And so the dawned light in pomp receive.   
For 't was the morn: Apollo's upward fire

## THE FOREST SHRINE

•Made every eastern cloud a silvery pyre  
Of brightness so unsullied that therein  
A melancholy spirit well might win  
Oblivion, and melt out his essence fine  
Into the winds rain scented eglantine  
Gave temperate sweets to that well woo-  
ing sun,  
The lark was lost in him, cold springs  
had run  
To warm their chilliest bubbles in the  
grass,  
Man's voice was on the mountains, and  
the mass  
Of nature's lives and wonders pulsed ten-  
fold,  
To feel this sun rise and its glories old

Now while the silent workings of the  
dawn  
Were busiest, into that self same lawn  
All suddenly, with joyful cries, there sped  
A troop of little children garlanded,  
Who, gathering round the altar, seem'd to  
pry  
Earnestly round as wishing to espy  
Some folk of holiday nor had they waited  
For many moments, ere their ears were  
sated  
With a faint breath of music, which even  
then

## *THE FOREST SHRINE*

Fill'd out its voice, and died away again. 't  
Within a little space again it gave  
Its airy swellings, with a gentle wave,  
To light-hung leaves, in smoothest echoes  
    breaking  
Through copse-clad valleys, — ere their  
    death, o'ertaking  
The surgy murmurs of the lonely sea.

## Hymn to Pan

FROM "ENDYMION"

"O thou, whose mighty palace roof  
doth hang  
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth  
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life,  
death  
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness;  
Who lovest to see the hamadryads dress  
Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels  
darken;  
And through whole solemn hours dost sit,  
and hearken  
The dreary melody of bedded reeds—  
In desolate places, where dank moisture  
breeds  
The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth,  
Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth  
Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou  
now,  
By thy love's milky brow!  
By all the trembling mazes that she ran,  
Hear us, great Pan!

"O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet,  
turtles  
Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,



## HYMN TO PAN

What time thou wanderest at eventide  
Through sunny meadows, that outskirt  
the side  
Of thine enmossed realms: O thou, to  
whom  
Broad-leaved fig-trees even now foredoom  
Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow-girded bees  
Their golden honeycombs; our village  
leas  
Their fairest blossom'd beans and popped  
corn;  
The chuckling linnet its five young un-  
born,  
To sing for thee; low-creeping straw-  
berries  
Their summer coolness; pent-up butter-  
flies  
Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh-bud-  
ding year  
All its completions—be quickly near,  
By every wind that nods the mountain  
pine,  
O forester divine!

“Thou, to whom every faun and satyr  
flies  
For willing service; whether to surprise  
The squatted hare while in half-sleeping  
fit;  
Or upward ragged precipices flit

## HYMN TO PAN

- To save poor lambkins from the eagle's  
    maw,  
Or by mysterious enticement draw  
Bewilder'd shepherds to their path again,  
Or to tread breathless round the frothy  
    main,  
And gather up all fancifullest shells  
For thee to tumble into Narads' cells,  
And, being hidden, laugh at their out-  
    peeping,  
Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,  
The while they pelt each other on the  
    crown  
With silvery oak-apples, and fir-cones  
    brown—  
By all the echoes that about thee ring,  
Hear us, O satyr king!

“O Harkener to the loud-clapping  
    shears,  
While ever and anon to his shorn peers  
A ram goes bleating Winder of the horn,  
When snouted wild-boars routing tender  
    corn  
Anger our huntsman Breather round our  
    farms,  
To keep off mildews, and all weather  
    harms  
Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds  
That come a swooning over hollow grounds

## HYMN TO PAN

And wither drearily on barren moors:  
Dread opener of the mysterious doors  
Leading to universal knowledge—see,  
Great son of Dryope,  
The many that are come to pay their vows  
With leaves about their brows!

“Be still the unimaginable lodge  
For solitary thinkings; such as dodge  
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,  
Then leave the naked brain: be still the  
leaven,  
That spreading in this dull and clodded  
earth,  
Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth:  
Be still a symbol of immensity;  
A firmament reflected in a sea;  
An element filling the space between;  
An unknown—but no more: we humbly  
screen  
With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly  
bending,  
And giving out a shout most heaven-  
rending,  
Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan,  
Upon thy Mount Lycean!”

## Sleep



FROM "ENDYMION"

O magic sleep! O comfortable bird,  
That broodest o'er the troubled sea of  
the mind  
Till it is hush'd and smooth! O uncon-  
fined

Restraint! imprison'd liberty! great key  
To golden palaces, strange minstrelsy,  
Fountains grotesque, new trees, bespangled  
caves,

Echoing grottoes, full of tumbling waves  
And moonlight; ay, to all the mazy  
world

Of silvery enchantment!—who, upfurl'd  
Beneath thy drowsy wing a triple hour,  
But renovates and lives?

## Endymion's first Vision of Dian



FROM "ENDYMION"

"This river does not see the naked sky  
Till it begins to progress silverly  
Around the western border of the wood,  
Whence, from a certain spot, its winding  
flood

Seems at the distance like a crescent  
moon:

And in that nook, the very pride of June,  
Had I been used to pass my weary eves;  
The rather for the sun unwilling leaves  
So dear a picture of his sovereign power,  
And I could witness his most kingly hour,  
When he doth tighten up the golden reins,  
And paces leisurely down amber plains  
His snorting four. Now when his chariot  
last

Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,  
There blossom'd suddenly a magic bed  
Of sacred dittany, and poppies red:  
At which I wonder'd greatly, knowing  
well

That but one night had wrought this  
flowery spell;

## FIRST VISION OF DIAN

- And, sitting down close by, began to muse  
What it might mean    Perhaps, thought  
    I, Morpheus,  
In passing here, his owlet pinions shook,  
Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook  
Her ebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth  
Had dipp'd his rod in it    such garland  
    wealth  
Came not by common growth    Thus on  
    I thought,  
Until my head was dizzy and distraught  
Moreover, through the dancing poppies  
    stole  
A breeze most softly lulling to my soul,  
And shaping visions all about my sight  
Of colours, wings, and bursts of spangly  
    light,  
The which became more strange, and  
    strange, and dim,  
And then were gulf'd in a tumultuous  
    swim  
And then I fell asleep    Ah, can I tell  
The enchantment that afterwards befell?  
Yet it was but a dream    yet such a dream  
That never tongue, although it overteem  
With mellow utterance, like a cavern  
    spring,  
Could figure out and to conception bring  
All I beheld and felt    Methought I lay  
Watching the zenith, where the milky way

## ENDYMION'S

Among the stars in virgin splendour pours ;  
And travelling my eye, until the doors  
Of heaven appear'd to open for my flight,  
I became loth and fearful to alight  
From such high soaring by a downward  
glance :

So kept me stedfast in that airy trance  
Spreading imaginary pinions wide.  
When, presently, the stars began to glide,  
And faint away, before my eager view :  
At which I sigh'd that I could not pursue,  
And dropp'd my vision to the horizon's  
verge ;

And lo ! from opening clouds, I saw  
emerge

The loveliest moon that ever silver'd o'er  
A shell for Neptune's goblet ; she did soar  
So passionately bright, my dazzled soul  
Commingling with her argent spheres did  
roll

Through clear and cloudy, even when  
she went

At last into a dark and vapoury tent—  
Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed train  
Of planets all were in the blue again.

To commune with those orbs, once more  
I raised

My sight right upward : but it was quite  
dazed

By a bright something sailing down apace,

## FIRST VISION OF DIAN

- Making me quickly veil my eyes and face:  
Again I look'd, and, O ye deities,  
Who from Olympus watch our destinies!  
Whence that completed form of all completeness?  
Whence came that high perfection of all sweetness?  
Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where,  
O where  
Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair?  
Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western sun;  
Not—thy soft hand, fair sister! let me shun  
Such follying before thee—yet she had,  
Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad;  
And they were simply gordian'd up and braided,  
Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,  
Her pearl-round ears, white neck, and orb'd brow;  
The which were blended in, I know not how,  
With such a paradise of lips and eyes,  
Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs,  
That, when I think thereon, my spirit clings  
And plays about its fancy, till the stings  
Of human neighbourhood envenom all.



## ENDYMION'S

Unto what awful power shall I call?  
To what high fane?—Ah! see her hovering feet,  
More bluely vein'd, more soft, more whitely sweet  
Than those of sea-born Venus, when she rose  
From out her cradle shell. The wind out-blows  
Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion;  
'Tis blue, and over-spangled with a million  
Of little eyes, as though thou wert to shed,  
Over the darkest, lushest blue-bell bed,  
Handfuls of daisies."—"Endymion, how strange!  
Dream within dream!"—"She took an airy range,  
And then, towards me, like a very maid,  
Came blushing, waning, willing, and afraid,  
And press'd me by the hand: Ah! 'twas too much;  
Methought I fainted at the charmed touch,  
Yet held my recollection, even as one  
Who dives three fathoms where the waters run  
Gurgling in beds of coral: for anon,  
I felt upmounted in that region  
Where falling stars dart their artillery forth,

## FIRST VISION OF DIAN

- And eagles struggle with the buffeting  
north  
That balances the heavy meteor stone,—  
Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone,  
But lapp'd and lull'd along the danger-  
ous sky  
Soon, as it seem'd, we left our journey-  
ing high,  
And straightway into frightful eddies  
swoop'd  
Such as aye muster where gray time has  
scoop'd  
Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's  
side  
There hollow sounds aroused me and I  
sigh'd  
To faint once more by looking on my  
bliss—  
I was distracted, madly did I kiss  
The wooing arms which held me, and  
did give  
My eyes at once to death but 'twas to  
live,  
To take in draughts of life from the gold  
fount  
Of kind and passionate looks, to count,  
and count  
The moments, by some greedy help that  
seem'd  
A second self, that each might be redeem'd

## ENDYMION'S

And plunder'd of its load of blessedness. '   
 Ah, desperate mortal! I even dared to press  
 Her very cheek against my crowned lip,  
 And, at that moment, felt my body dip  
 Into a warmer air: a moment more,  
 Our feet were soft in flowers. There was  
 store

Of newest joys upon that alp. Sometimes  
 A scent of violets, and blossoming limes,  
 Loiter'd around us; then of honey cells,  
 Made delicate from all white-flower bells;  
 And once, above the edges of our nest, .  
 An arch face peep'd,—an Oread as I  
 guess'd.

“Why did I dream that sleep o'er-  
 power'd me  
 In midst of all this heaven? Why not see,  
 Far off, the shadows of his' pinions dark,  
 And stare them from me? But no, like a  
 spark  
 That needs must die, although its little  
 beam  
 Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream  
 Fell into nothing—into stupid sleep.  
 And so it was, until a gentle creep,  
 A careful moving caught my waking ears,  
 And up I started: Ah! my sighs, my tears,  
 My clenched hands;—for lo! the poppies  
 hung

## *FIRST VISION OF DIAN*

- Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel  
    sung  
A heavy ditty, and the sullen day  
Had chidden herald Hesperus away,  
With leaden looks: the solitary breeze  
Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did  
    tease  
With wayward melancholy; and I thought,  
Mark me, Peonal that sometimes it  
    brought  
Faint fare-thee-wells, and sigh-shrilled  
    adieux!"

# Love



FROM "ENDYMION"

O sovereign power of love! O grief! O  
balm!

All records, saving thine, come cool, and  
calm,

And shadowy, through the mist of passed  
years:

For others, good or bad, hatred and tears  
Have become indolent; but touching thine,  
One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth  
pine,

One kiss brings honey-dew from buried  
days.

The woes of Troy, towers smothering o'er  
their blaze,

Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears,  
keen blades,

Struggling, and blood, and shrieks—all  
dimly fades

Into some backward corner of the brain;  
Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain

The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.

Hence, pageant history! hence, gilded  
cheat!

## LOVE

- Swart planet in the universe of deeds!  
Wide sea, that one continuous murmur  
breeds  
Along the pebbled shore of memory!  
Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be  
Upon thy vaporous bosom, magnified  
To goodly vessels; many a sail of pride,  
And golden-keel'd, is left unlaunch'd and  
dry.  
But wherefore this? What care, though  
owl did fly  
About the great Athenian admiral's mast?  
What care, though striding Alexander past  
The Indus with his Macedonian numbers?  
Though old Ulysses tortured from his  
slumbers  
The gluttoned Cyclops, what care?—Juliet  
leaning  
Amid her window-flowers,—sighing,—  
weaning  
Tenderly her fancy from its maiden snow,  
Doth more avail than these: the silver  
flow  
Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,  
Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,  
Are things to brood on with more ardency  
Than the death-day of empires.
-

# The Under- World



FROM "ENDYMION"

'Twas far too strange and wonderful  
for sadness;  
Sharpening, by degrees, his appetite  
To dive into the deepest. Dark, nor  
light,  
The region; nor bright, nor sombre  
wholly,  
But mingled up; a gleaming melancholy;  
A dusky empire and its diadems;  
One faint eternal eventide of gems.  
Ay, millions sparkled on a vein of gold,  
Along whose track the prince quick foot-  
steps told,  
With all its lines abrupt and angular:  
Out-shooting sometimes, like a meteor-  
star,  
Through a vast antre; then the metal  
woof,  
Like Vulcan's rainbow, with some mon-  
strous root

## THE UNDER-WORLD

• Curves hugely now, far in the deep abyss,  
It seems an angry lightning, and doth  
hiss

Fancy into belief anon it leads  
Through winding passages, where same-  
ness breeds

Vexing conceptions of some sudden change,  
Whether to silver grotts, or giant range  
Of sapphire columns, or fantastic bridge  
Athwart a flood of crystal On a ridge  
Now fareth he, that o'er the vast beneath  
Towers like an ocean cliff, and whence  
he seeth

A hundred waterfalls, whose voices come  
But as the murmuring surge Chilly  
and numb

His bosom grew, when first he, far away,  
Described an orb'd diamond, set to fray  
Old Darkness from his throne 'twas  
like the sun

Uprisen o'er chaos and with such a stun  
Came the amazement, that, absorb'd in it,  
He saw not fiercer wonders—past the wit  
Of any spirit to tell, but one of those  
Who, when this planet's sphering time  
doth close,

Will be its high remembrancers who  
they?

The mighty ones who have made eternal  
day



## THE UNDER-WORLD

For Greece and England. While astonish-  
ment

With deep-drawn sighs was quieting, he  
went

Into a marble gallery, passing through  
A mimic temple, so complete and true  
In sacred custom, that he well-nigh  
feared

To search it inwards; whence far off ap-  
peared

Through a long pillared vista, a fair  
shrine,

And, just beyond, on light tiptoe divine,  
A quivered Dian. Stepping awfully,  
The youth approached; oft turning his  
veiled eye

Down sidelong aisles, and into niches  
old.

And when, more near against the marble  
cold

He had touched his forehead, he began  
to thread

All courts and passages, where silence  
dead,

Roused by his whispering footsteps, mur-  
mured faint:

And long he traversed to and fro, to ac-  
quaint

Himself with every mystery, and awe;  
Till, weary, he sat down before the maw

## *THE UNDER-WORLD*

Of a wide outlet, fathomless and dim,  
To wild uncertainty and shadows grim.  
There, when new wonders ceased to float  
before,  
And thoughts of self came on, how crude  
and sore  
The journey homeward to habitual self!  
A mad-pursuing of the fog-born elf,  
Whose flitting lantern, through rude  
nettle-brier,  
Cheats us into a swamp, into a fire,  
Into the bosom of a hated thing

Prayer to Dian  
from the  
Sea-Cave



FROM "ENDYMION"

“ O Haunter chaste  
Of river sides, and woods, and heath  
waste,  
Where with thy silver bow and arrow  
keen  
Art thou now forested? O woodland  
Queen,  
What smoothest air thy smoother fore  
head woos?  
Where dost thou listen to the wide halloo  
Of thy departed nymphs? Through what  
dark tree  
Glimmers thy crescent? Wheresoe’er it be  
'Tis in the breath of heaven: thou dost  
taste  
Freedom as none can taste it, nor dost  
waste  
Thy loveliness in dismal elements;  
But, finding in our green earth sweet  
contents,  
There livest blissfully. Ah, if to thee  
It feels Elysian, how rich to me,

## *PRAYER TO DIAN*

\*An exiled mortal, sounds its pleasant name!

Within my breast there lives a choking flame—

O let me cool it zephyr-boughs among!

A homeward fever parches up my tongue—

O let me slake it at the running springs!

Upon my ear a noisy nothing rings—

O let me once more hear the linnet's note!

Before mine eyes thick films and shadows float—

O let me 'noint them with the heaven's light!

Dost thou now lave thy feet and ankles white?

O think how sweet to me the freshening sluice!

Dost thou now please thy thirst with berry-juice?

O think how this dry palate would rejoice!

If in soft slumber thou dost hear my voice,

O think how I should love a bed of flowers!

Young goddess! let me see my native bowers!

Deliver me from this rapacious deep!"

# The Bower

FROM "ENDYMION"



It was a jasmine bower, all bestrown  
With golden moss. His every sense had  
grown

Ethereal for pleasure; 'bove his head  
Flew a delight half-graspable; his tread  
Was Hesperean; to his capable ears  
Silence was music from the holy spheres;  
A dewy luxury was in his eyes;  
The little flowers felt his pleasant sighs  
And stirr'd them faintly. Verdant cave  
and cell

He wand'red through, oft wondering at  
such swell

Of sudden exaltation: but, "Alas!"

Said he, "will all this gush of feeling  
pass

Away in solitude? And must they wane,  
Like melodies upon a sandy plain,  
Without an echo? Then shall I be left  
So sad, so melancholy; so bereft!

Yet still I feel immortal! O my love,  
My breath of life, where art thou? High  
above,

## THE BOWER

• Dancing before the morning gates of  
heaven?

Or keeping watch among those starry  
seven,

Old Atlas' children? Art a maid of the  
waters,

One of shell-winding Triton's bright-hair'd  
daughters?

Or art, impossible! a nymph of Dian's,  
Weaving a coronal of tender scions

For very idleness? Where'er thou art,

Methinks it now is at my will to start

Into thine arms; to scare Aurora's train,

And snatch thee from the morning; o'er  
the main

To scud like a wild bird, and take thee off

From thy sea-foamy cradle; or to doff

Thy shepherd vest, and woo thee 'mid fresh  
leaves.

No, no, too eagerly my soul deceives

Its powerless self: I know this cannot be.

O let me then by some sweet dreaming  
flee

To her entrancements: hither, Sleep,  
awhile!

Hither, most gentle Sleep! and soothing  
foil

For some few hours the coming solitude."

# The Moon



FROM "ENDYMION"

There are throned seats unscalable  
But by a patient wing, a constant spell,  
Or by ethereal things that, unconfined,  
Can make a ladder of the eternal wind,  
And poise about in cloudy thunder-tents  
To watch the abysm-birth of elements.  
Ay, 'bove the withering of old-lipp'd Fate  
A thousand Powers keep religious state,  
In water, fiery realm, and airy bourne;  
And, silent as a consecrated urn,  
Hold sphery sessions for a season due.  
Yet few of these far majesties, ah, few!  
Have bared their operations to this globe—  
Few, who with gorgeous pageantry en-  
robe

Our piece of heaven—whose benevolence  
Shakes hand with our own Ceres; every  
sense

Filling with spiritual sweets to plenitude,  
As bees gorge full their cells. And by  
the feud

'Twixt Nothing and Creation, I here  
swear,

Eterne Apollo! that thy Sister fair

## THE MOON

Is of all these the gentler mightiest.  
When thy gold breath is misting in the  
west  
She unobserved steals unto her throne,  
And there she sits most meek and most  
alone,  
As if she had not pomp subservient,  
As if thine eye, high Poet! was not bent  
Towards her with the Muses in thine  
heart,  
As if the minst'ring stars kept not apart,  
Waiting for silver-footed messages  
O Moon! the oldest shades 'mong oldest  
trees  
Feel palpitations when thou lookest in  
O Moon! old'boughs hsp forth a holier  
din  
The while they feel thine airy fellowship  
Thou dost bless everywhere, with silver lip  
Kissing dead things to life The sleeping  
line,  
Couch'd in thy brightness, dream ol fields  
divine  
Innumerable mountains rise, and rise,  
Ambitious for the hallowing of thine eyes,  
And yet thy benediction passeth not  
One obscure hiding place, one little spot  
Where pleasure may be sent the nested  
wren  
Has thy fair face within its tranquil ken,



## THE MOON

And from beneath a sheltering ivy leaf  
Takes glimpses of thee; thou art a relief  
To the poor patient oyster, where it sleeps  
Within its pearly house;—The mighty  
      deeps,

The monstrous sea is thine—the myriad  
      sea!

O Moon! far spooming Ocean bows to  
      thee,

And Tellus feels her forehead's cumbrous  
      load.

Cynthia! where art thou now? What  
      far abode

Of green or silvery bower doth enshrine  
Such utmost beauty? Alas, thou dost pine  
For one as sorrowful: thy cheek is pale  
For one whose cheek is pale: thou dost  
      bewail

His tears who weeps for thee! Where dost  
      thou sigh?

Ah! surely that light peeps from Vesper's  
      eye,

Or, what a thing is love! 'Tis She, but lo!  
How changed, how full of ache, how gone  
      in woe!

She dies at the thinnest cloud; her loveli-  
      ness

Is wan on Neptune's blue: yet there's a  
      stress

## THE MOON

- Of love-spangles, just off yon cape of trees,  
Dancing upon the waves, as if to please  
The curly foam with amorous influence  
O, not so idle! for down glancing thence,  
She fathoms eddies, and runs wild about  
O'erwhelming water-courses, scaring out  
The thorny sharks from hiding holes, and  
fright'ning  
Their savage eyes with unaccustom'd  
lightning  
Where will the splendour be content to  
reach?  
O love! how potent hast thou been to  
teach  
Strange journeyings! Wherever beauty  
dwells,  
In gulf or aerie, mountains or deep dells,  
In light, in gloom, in star or blazing sun,  
Thou pointest out the way, and straight  
't is won  
Amid his toil thou gavest Leander breath,  
Thou leddest Orpheus through the gleams  
of death,  
Thou madest Pluto bear thin element  
And now, O winged Chieftain! thou hast  
sent  
A moon beam to the deep, deep water-  
world,  
To find Endymion

## The Muse of England



FROM "ENDYMION"

Muse of my native land! loftiest Muse!  
O first-born on the mountains! By the  
hues

Of heaven on the spiritual air begot:  
Long didst thou sit alone in northern  
grot,

While yet our England was a wolfish den;  
Before our forests heard the talk of men;  
Before the first of Druids was a child;—  
Long didst thou sit amid our regions  
wild,

Rapt in a deep prophetic solitude.  
There came an eastern voice of solemn  
mood:—

Yet wast thou patient. Then sang forth  
the Nine,

Apollo's garland:—yet didst thou divine  
Such home-bred glory, that they cried in  
vain,

"Come hither, Sister of the Island!"  
Plain

## THE MUSE OF ENGLAND

- Spake fair Ausonia, and once more she  
    spake  
A higher summons —still didst thou be-  
    take  
Thee to thy native hopes   O thou hast  
    won  
A full accomplishment!   The thing is  
    done,  
Which undone, these our latter days had  
    risen  
On barren souls   Great Muse, thou  
    know'st what prison  
Of flesh and bone, curbs, and confines,  
    and frets  
Our spirits' wings   despondency besets  
Our pillows, and the fresh to-morrow  
    morn  
Seems to give forth its light in very scorn  
Of our dull uninspired, snail paced lives  
Long have I said, how happy he who  
    shives  
To thee! But then I thought on poets  
    gone  
And could not pray

## The Dark Lady's Song



FROM "ENDYMION"

O Sorrow!

Why dost borrow

The natural hue of health from vermeil  
lips?—

To give maiden blushes

To the white rose bushes?

Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

O Sorrow!

Why dost borrow

The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—

To give the glow-worm light?

Or, on a moonless night,

To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry?

O Sorrow!

Why dost borrow

The mellow ditties from a mourning  
tongue?—

To give at evening pale

Unto the nightingale,

That thou mayst listen the cold dews  
among?

## THE DARK LADY'S SONG

O Sorrow !  
Why dost borrow  
Heart's lightness from the merriment of  
May?  
A lover would not tread  
A cowslip on the head,  
Though he should dance from eve till  
peep of day—  
Nor any drooping flower  
Held sacred for thy bower,  
Wherever he may sport himself and play

To Sorrow,  
I bade good morrow,  
And thought to leave her far away behind,  
But cheerly, cheerly,  
She loves me dearly,  
She is so constant to me, and so kind  
I would deceive her,  
And so leave her,  
But ah! she is so constant and so kind

Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,  
I sat a weeping in the whole world wide  
There was no one to ask me why I wept—  
And so I kept  
Brumming the water-lily cups with tears  
Cold as my fears

## THE DARK LADY'S SON

Beneath my palm-trees, by the  
I sat a weeping: what charm our'd  
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the cl  
But hides and shrou ds  
Beneath dark palm-trees by a river

And as I sat, over the light blue hi  
There came a noise of revelers: the  
Into the wide stream came of purple  
'Twas Bacchus and his  
The earnest trumpet spake, and  
thrills

From kissing cymbals made a merry  
'Twas Bacchus and his kin  
Like to a moving vintage down they  
Crown'd with green leaves, and  
on flame;

All madly dancing through the  
valley,

To scare thee, Melancholy!  
O then, O then, thou wast a simple  
And I forgot thee, as the be-ried h  
By shepherds is forgotten, w<sup>en</sup>, in  
Tall chestnuts keep away the sun  
moon:—

I rush'd into the folly!

Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus  
Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mo  
With sidelong laughing;

## THE DARK LADY'S SONG

And little rills of crimson wine imbrued  
His plump white arms, and shoulders,  
    enough white  
    For Venus' pearly bite,  
And near him rode Silenus on his ass,  
Pelted with flowers as he on did pass  
    Tipsily quaffing

Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence  
    came ye,  
So many, and so many and such glee?  
Why have ye left your bowers desolate  
    Your lutes, and gentler fate?  
"We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the  
    wing,  
    A conquering!  
Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill  
    betide,  
We dance before him thorough kingdoms  
    wide —  
Come hither, lady fair and joined be  
    To our wild minstrelsy!"

Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence  
    came ye,  
So many and so many, and such glee?  
Why have ye left your forest haunts why  
    left  
    Your nuts in oak tree cleft?—



## THE DARK LADY'S SONG

“For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;  
For wine we left our heath, and yellow  
brooms,

And cold mushrooms;

For wine we follow Bacchus through the  
earth;

Great god of breathless cups and chirping  
mirth!

Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
To our mad minstrelsy!”

Over wide streams and mountains great  
we went,

And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,  
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,

With Asian elephants:

Onward these myriads—with song and  
dance,

With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians’  
prance,

Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,

Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,  
Plump infant laughs mimicking the coil  
Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers’ toil;  
With toying oars and silken sails they  
glide,

Nor care for wind and tide.

## THE DARK LADY'S SONG

Mounted on panthers' furs and lions'  
manes,  
From rear to van they scour about the  
plains;  
A three days' journey in a moment done;  
And always, at the rising of the sun,  
About the wilds they hunt with spear and  
horn  
On spleenful unicorn.

I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown  
Before the vine-wreath crown!  
I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing  
To the silver cymbals' ring!  
I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce  
Old Tartary the fierce!  
The kings of Ind their jewel-sceptres vail,  
And from their treasures scatter pearly  
hail;  
Great Brahma from his mystic heaven  
groans,  
And all his priesthood moans,  
Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning  
pale.  
Into these regions came I, following him,  
Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim  
To stray away into these forests drear,  
Alone, without a peer:  
And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.,

## THE DARK LADY'S SONG

Young Stranger!  
I've been a ranger  
In search of pleasure throughout every  
clime;  
Alas! 'tis not for me:  
Bewitch'd I sure must be,  
To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

Come then, Sorrow,  
Sweetest Sorrow!  
Like an own babe I nurse thee on my  
breast:  
I thought to leave thee,  
And deceive thee,  
But now of all the world I love thee best.

There is not one,  
No, no, not one  
But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;  
Thou art her mother,  
And her brother,  
Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade.

## Song of Dian's Feast

FROM 'ENDYMION'



Who, who from Dian's feast would be  
away?  
For all the golden bowers of the day  
Are empty left! Who, who away would  
be  
From Cynthia's wedding and festivity?  
Not Hesperus lo<sup>t</sup> upon his silver wings  
He leans away for highest heaven and  
sings,  
Snapping his lucid fingers merrily!—  
Ah, Zephyrus<sup>t</sup> art here, and Flora too  
Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,  
Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,  
Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill  
Your baskets high  
With fennel green, and balm, and golden  
pines,  
Savory, latter mint, and columbines,  
Cool parsley, basil sweet, and sunny  
thyme,  
Yea, every flower and leaf of every clime,

## SONG OF DIAN'S FEAST

All gather'd in the dewy morning: hie ,

Away! fly, fly!—

Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,  
Aquarius! to whom king Jove has given  
Two liquid pulse streams 'stead of feather'd  
wings,

Two fanlike fountains,—thine illuminings  
For Dian play:

Dissolve the frozen purity of air;  
Let thy white shoulders silvery and bare  
Show cold through watery pinions; make  
more bright

The Star-Queen's crescent on her marriage  
night:

Haste, haste away!

Castor has tamed the planet Lion, see!  
And of the Bear has Pollux mastery:  
A third is in the race! who is the third,  
Speeding away swift as the eagle bird?

The ramping Centaur!

The Lion's mane's on end: the Bear how  
fierce!

The Centaur's arrow ready seems to pierce  
Some enemy: far forth his bow is bent  
Into the blue of heaven. He'll be shent,  
Pale unrelentor,

When he shall hear the wedding lutes a  
playing—

Andromeda! sweet woman! why delaying  
So timidly among the stars: come hither!

*SONG OF DIAN'S FEAST*

Join this bright throng, and nimbly follow  
whither

They all are going.

Danae's Son, before Jove newly bow'd,  
Has wept for thee, calling to Jove aloud.  
Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral:  
Ye shall for ever live and love, for all

Thy tears are flowing.—

By Daphne's fright, behold Apollo!—

# Isabella; Or, the Pot of Basil



A STORY, FROM BOCCACCIO

Fair Isabel, poor simple Isabel!

Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye!  
They could not in the self-same mansion  
dwell

Without some stir of heart, some malady;  
They could not sit at meals but feel how  
well

It soothed each to be the other by;  
They could not, sure, beneath the same  
roof sleep,  
But to each other dream, and nightly  
weep.

With every morn their love grew tenderer,  
With every eve deeper and tenderer still;  
He might not in house, field, or garden  
stir,

But her full shape would all his seeing  
fill;  
And his continual voice was pleasanter  
To her, than noise of trees or hidden  
rill;

## ISABELLA

Her lute string gave an echo of his name,  
She spoilt her half-done broidery with the  
same

He knew whose gentle hand was at the  
latch,

Before the door had given her to his  
eyes,

And from her chamber-window he would  
catch

Her beauty farther than the falcon spies,  
And constant as her vespers would he  
watch,

Because her face was turn'd to the  
same skies,

And with sick longing all the night out-  
wear,

To hear her morning-step upon the stair

A whole long month of May in this sad  
plight

Made their cheeks paler by the break of  
June

"To-morrow will I bow to my delight,

To-morrow will I ask my lady's boon '—

"O may I never see another night,

Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's  
tune"—

So spake they to their pillows, but, alas,  
Honeyless days and days did he let pass,



## ISABELLA

Until sweet Isabella's untouch'd cheek  
Fell sick within the rose's just domain,  
Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth  
seek

By every lull to cool her infant's pain:  
"How ill she is!" said he, "I may not  
speak,

And yet I will, and tell my love all  
plain:

If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her  
tears,

And at the least 'twill startle off her  
cares."

So said he one fair morning, and all day

His heart beat awfully against his side;  
And to his heart he inwardly did pray

For power to speak; but still the ruddy  
tide

Stifled his voice, and pulsed resolve away—

Fever'd his high conceit of such a bride,  
Yet brought him to the meekness of a  
child:

Alas! when passion is both meek and  
wild!

So once more he had waked and anguished

A dreary night of love and misery,  
If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed  
To every symbol on his forehead high;

## ISABELLA

She saw it waxing very pale and dead,  
And straight all flush'd; so, lisped tenderly,  
"Lorenzo!"—here she ceased her timid quest,  
But in her tone and look he read the rest.

"O Isabella! I can half perceive  
That I may speak my grief into thine ear;  
If thou didst ever anything believe,  
Believe how I love thee, believe how near  
My soul is to its doom, I would not grieve  
Thy hand by unwelcome pressing, would not fear  
Thine eyes by gazing; but I cannot live  
Another night, and not my passion shrive.

"Love! thou art leading me from wintry cold,  
Lady! thou leadest me to summer clime,  
And I must taste the blossoms that unfold  
In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time."  
So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,  
And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme:

## ISABELLA

Great bliss was with them, and great  
happiness  
Grew, like a lusty flower in June's caress.

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the air,  
Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart  
Only to meet again more close, and share  
The inward fragrance of each other's  
heart,  
She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair  
Sang, of delicious love and honey'd dart;  
He with light steps went up a western  
hill,  
And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd his  
fill.

All close they met again, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant  
veil,  
All close they met, all eves, before the  
dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant  
veil,  
Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
Unknown of any, free from whisper-  
ing tale.  
Ah! better had it been for ever so,  
Than idle ears should pleasure in their  
woe.

## ISABELLA

Were they unhappy then?—It cannot be—  
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,  
Too many sighs give we to them in fee,  
Too much of pity after they are dead,  
Too many doleful stories do we see,  
Whose matter in bright gold were best  
be read,  
Except in such a page where Theseus'  
spouse  
Over the pathless waves towards him bows

But for the general ward of love,  
The little sweet doth kill much bitterness,  
Though Dido silent is in under grove,  
And Isabella's was a great distress,  
Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian  
clove  
Was not embalm'd, this truth is not  
the less—  
Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-  
bowers,  
Know there is richest juice in poison-  
flowers

With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,  
Enriched from ancestral merchandise,  
And for them many a weary hand did  
swelt  
In torched mines and noisy factories,

## ISABELLA

And many once proud-quiver'd loins did  
melt

In blood from stinging whip; with hollow  
eyes

Many all day in dazzling river stood,  
To take the rich-ored driftings of the  
flood.

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,  
And went all naked to the hungry  
shark;

For them his ears gush'd blood; for them  
in death

The seal on the cold ice with piteous  
bark

Lay full of darts; for them alone did  
seethe

A thousand men in troubles wide and  
dark:

Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,  
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch  
and peel.

Why were they proud? Because their  
marble founts

Gush'd with more pride than do a  
wretch's tears?

## ISABELLA

Why were they proud? Because fair  
orange-mounts

Were of more soft ascent than lazar  
stairs?

Why were they proud? Because red-  
lined accounts

Were richer than the songs of Grecian  
years?

Why were they proud? again we ask  
aloud,

Why in the name of Glory were they  
proud?

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired  
In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,  
As two close Hebrews in that land in-  
spired,

Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-  
spies;

The hawks of ship-mast forests—the un-  
tired

And pannier'd mules for ducats and old  
lies—

Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-  
away,—

Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

How was it these same leger-men could  
spy

Fair Isabella in her downy nest?

## ISABELLA

How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye  
A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's  
pest

Into their vision covetous and sly!

How could these money-bags see east  
and west?

Yet so they did—and every dealer fair  
Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!

Of thee we now should ask forgiving  
boon,

And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,

And of thy roses amorous of the moon,  
And of thy lilies, that do paler grow .

Now they can no more hear thy ghittern's  
tune,

For venturing syllables that ill beseem  
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the  
tale

Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;

There is no other crime, no mad assail

To make old prose in modern rhyme  
more sweet:

But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—  
To honour thee, and thy gone spirit  
greet;

## ISABELLA

To stead thee as a verse in English  
tongue,  
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

These brethren having found by many  
signs

What love Lorenzo for their sister had,  
And how she loved him too, each uncon-  
fines

His bitter thoughts to other, well nigh  
mad

That he, the servant of their trade designs,  
Should in their sister's love be blithe  
and glad,

When 'twas their plan to coax her by  
degrees

To some high noble and his olive-trees

And many a jealous conference had they,  
And many times they bit their lips  
alone,

Before they fix'd upon a surest way  
To make the youngster for his crime  
atone;

And at the last, these men of cruel clay  
Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the  
bone;

For they resolved in some forest dim  
To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.



## ISABELLA

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant  
Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade  
Of the garden-terrace, towards him they  
bent

Their footing through the dews; and to  
him said,

"You seem there in the quiet of content,  
Lorenzo, and we are most loth to in-  
vade

Calm speculation; but if you are wise,  
Bestride your steed while cold is in the  
skies.

"To-day we purpose, ay, this hour we  
mount

To spur three leagues towards the Apen-  
nine;

Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot  
sun count

His dewy rosary on the eglantine."  
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,  
Bow'd a fair greeting to these serpents'  
whine;

And went in haste, to get in readiness,  
With belt, and spur, and bracing hunts-  
man's dress.

And as he to the courtyard pass'd along,  
Each third step did he pause, and listen'd  
oft

## ISABELLA

If he could hear his lady's matin-song,  
Or the light whisper of her footsteps oft;  
And as he thus over his passion hung,  
He heard a laugh full musical aloft;  
When, looking up, he saw her features  
bright  
Smile through an indoor lattice all delight.

"Love, Isabel!" said he, "I was in pain  
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good  
morrow:  
Ah! what if I should lose thee, when so  
fain  
I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow  
Of a poor three hours' absence? but we'll  
gain  
Out of the amorous dark what day doth  
borrow.  
Good bye! I'll soon be back."—"Good  
bye!" said she:  
And as he went she chanted merrily.

' So the two brothers and their murder'd  
man  
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's  
stream  
Gurgles through straiten'd banks, and still  
doth fan  
Itself with dancing bulrush, and the  
bream

## ISABELLA

Keeps head against the freshets. Sick,  
and wan

The brothers' faces in the ford did seem,  
Lorenzo's flush with love. They pass'd  
the water

Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,  
There in that forest did his great love  
cease;

Ah! when a soul doth thus its freedom  
win,

It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace  
As the break-covert blood-hounds of such  
sin:

They dipp'd their swords in the water,  
and did tease

Their horses homeward, with convulsed  
spur,

Each richer by his being a murderer.

They told their sister how, with sudden  
speed,

Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign lands,  
Because of some great urgency and need

In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.  
Poor girl! put on thy stifling widow's  
weed,

And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed  
bands;

## ISABELLA

To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,  
And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be;  
Sorely she wept until the night came on,  
And then, instead of love, O misery!

She brooded o'er the luxury alone;  
His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,  
And to the silence made a gentle moan,  
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,  
And on her couch low murmuring,  
"Where? O where?"

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long

Its fiery vigil in her single breast;  
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung  
Upon the time with feverish unrest—  
Not long; for soon into her heart a throng  
Of higher occupants, a richer zest,  
Came, tragic; passion not to be subdued,  
And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

In the mid days of autumn, on their eves  
The breath of Winter comes from far  
away,  
And the sick west continually bereaves  
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay

## ISABELLA

Of death among the bushes and the leaves,  
To make all bare before he dares to stray  
From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel  
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes  
She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all  
pale,  
Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes  
Could keep him off so long? They  
spake a tale  
Time after time, to quiet her. Their crimes  
Came on them, like a smoke from  
Hinnom's vale;  
And every night in dreams they groan'd  
aloud,  
To see their sister in her snowy shroud

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,  
But for a thing more deadly dark than all;  
It came like a fierce potion, drunk by  
chance,  
Which 'saves a sick man from the  
feather'd pall  
For some few gasping moments; like a  
lance  
Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall  
With cruel pierce, and bringing him again  
Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and  
brain.

## ISABELLA

It was a vision. In the drowsy gloom,  
The dull of midnight, at her couch's foot  
Lorenzo stood, and wept: the forest tomb  
Had marr'd his glossy hair which once  
could shoot  
Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom  
Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute  
From his lorn voice, and past his loamed  
ears  
Had made a miry channel for his tears.

Strange sound it was, when the pale  
shadow spake;  
For there was striving, in its piteous  
tongue,  
To speak as when on earth it was awake,  
And Isabella on its music hung:  
Languor there was in it, and tremulous  
shake,  
As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung;  
And through it moan'd a ghostly under-  
song,  
Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars  
among.

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy  
bright  
With love, and kept all phantom fear  
aloof

## ISABELLA

From the poor girl by magic of their  
light,

The while it did unthread the horrid  
woof

Of the late darken'd time—the murderous  
spite

Of pride and avarice—the dark pine roof  
In the forest—and the sodden turfed dell,  
Where, without any word, from stabs he  
fell.

Saying moreover, “Isabel, my sweet!

Red whortle-berries droop above my  
head,

And a large flint-stone weighs upon my  
feet;

Around me beeches and high chestnuts  
shed

Their leaves and prickly nuts; a sheep-  
fold bleat

Comes from beyond the river to my bed:  
Go, shed one tear upon my heather-bloom,  
And it shall comfort me within the tomb.

“I am a shadow now, alas! alas!

Upon the skirts of human nature dwell-  
ing

Alone: I chant alone the holy mass,

While little sounds of life are round me  
knelling,

And glossy bees at noon do fieldward pass,

## ISABELLA

And many a chapel bell the hour is  
telling,  
Paining me through those sounds grow  
strange to me  
And thou art distant in Humanity

"I know what was, I feel full well what is  
And I should rage, if spirits could go  
mad,  
Though I forget the taste of earthly bliss  
That paleness warms my grave as  
though I had  
A seraph chosen from the bright abyss  
To be my spouse thy paleness makes  
me glad  
Thy beauty grows upon me and I feel  
A greater love through all my essence  
steal "

The Spirit mourn'd "Adieu!"—dissolved,  
and left

The atom darkness in a slow turmoil,  
As when of healthful midnight sleep bereft  
Thinking on rugged hours and fruitless  
toil,

We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,  
And see the spangly gloom froth up  
and boil

It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,  
And in the dawn she started up awake



“Ha! ha!” said she, “I knew not this  
hard life,

I thought the worst was simple misery;  
I thought some Fate with pleasure or  
with strife

Portion’d us—happy days, or else to die;  
But there is crime—a brother’s bloody  
knife!

Sweet Spirit, thou hast school’d my  
infancy:

I’ll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,  
And greet thee morn and even in the skies.”

When the full morning came, she had  
devised

How she might secret to the forest hie;  
How she might find the clay, so dearly  
prized,

And sing to it one latest lullaby;  
How her short absence might be unsur-  
mised,

While she the inmost of the dream would  
try.

Resolved, she took with her an aged nurse,  
And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

See, as they creep along the river side,  
How she doth whisper to that aged dame,

And, after looking round the champaign  
 wide,  
 Shows her a knife — "What feverous  
 hectic flame  
 Burns in thee, child?—what good can  
 thee betide  
 That thou shouldst smile again?"—The  
 evening came,  
 And they had found Lorenzo's earthly bed,  
 The flint was there, the berries at his head

Who hath not loiter'd in a green church-  
 yard,  
 And let his spirit, like a demon mole,  
 Work through the clayey soil and gravel  
 hard,  
 To see skull, coffin'd bones, and funeral  
 stole,  
 Pitying each form that hungry Death had  
 marr'd,  
 And filling it once more with human  
 soul?  
 Ah! this is holiday to what was felt  
 When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt

She gazed into the fresh-thrown mould,  
 as though  
 One glance did fully all its secrets tell,  
 Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know  
 Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well,

## ISABELLA

Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to  
grow,  
Like to a native lily of the dell:  
Then with her knife, all sudden she began  
To dig more fervently than misers can.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon  
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies;  
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than  
stone,  
And put it in her bosom, where it dries  
And freezes utterly unto the bone  
Those dainties made to still an infant's  
cries:  
Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd her  
care,  
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,  
Until her heart felt pity to the core  
At sight of such a dismal labouring,  
And so she kneeled, with her locks all  
hoar,  
And put her lean hands to the horrid thing:  
Three hours they labour'd at this travail  
sore;  
At last they felt the kernel of the grave,  
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

## ISABELLA

Ah! wherefore all this wormy circumstance?

Why linger at the yawning tomb so long?

O for the gentleness of old Romance,

The simple plaining of a minstrel's song!  
Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,

For here, in truth, it doth not well belong  
To speak:—O turn thee to the very tale,  
And taste the music of that vision pale.

With duller steel than the Perséan sword  
They cut away no formless monster's head,

But one, whose gentleness did well accord  
With death, as life. The ancient harps  
have said,

Love never dies, but lives, immortal Lord:

If Love impersonate was ever dead,  
Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd.  
'Twas love; cold—dead indeed, but not  
dethroned.

In anxious secrecy they took it home,

And then the prize was all for Isabel;  
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden  
comb,

And all around each eye's sepulchral cell  
Pointed each fringed lash; the smeared  
loam

## ISABELLA

With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,  
She drench'd away: and still she comb'd  
and kept  
Sighing all day—and still she kiss'd and  
wept.

Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the  
dews

Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,  
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze  
Through the cold serpent-pipe refresh-  
fully,—

She wrapp'd it up; and for its tomb did  
choose

A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by,  
And cover'd it with mould, and o'er it set  
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,  
And she forgot the blue above the trees,  
And she forgot the dells where waters run,  
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze;  
She had no knowledge when the day was  
done,

And the new morn she saw not: but in  
peace

Hung over her sweet Basil ever more,  
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

## ISABELLA

And so she ever fed it with thin tears  
Whence thick, and green and beautiful  
it grew,  
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers  
Of Basil tufts in Florence, for it drew  
Nurture besides, and life, from human  
fears,  
From the fast mouldering heart there  
shut from view  
So that the jewel, safely casketed,  
Came forth, and in perfumed leaflets spread

O Melancholy, linger here awhile!  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!  
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,  
Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!  
Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and  
smile,  
Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,  
And make a pale light in your cypress  
glooms,  
Tinting with silver wan your marble  
tombs

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,  
From the deep throat of sad Melpo-  
mene!  
Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,  
And touch the strings into a mystery,

## ISABELLA

With tears, as chilly upon the winds and  
She drench'd away  
and kept                    that is soon to be  
Sighing all day—a: She withers, like a palm  
wept.                    for its juicy balm.

Then in a silken scarf,                    to wither by itself;  
Let                    winter chill its dying  
Lew                    w.

It may not be—those Baah,                    ticks of self,  
Her brethren, noted the continu-                    shower  
From her dead eyes; and many                    a curious  
elf,

Among her kindred, wonder'd that such  
dower  
Of youth and beauty should be thrown  
aside

By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

And, furthermore, her brethren wonder'd  
much

Why she sat drooping by the Basil  
green,

And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch;  
Greatly they wonder'd what the thing  
might mean:

They could not surely give belief, that  
such

A very nothing would have power to  
wean

## ISABELLA

Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures  
    gay,  
And even remembrance of her love's delay

Therefore they watch'd a time when they  
    might sift

    This hidden whim, and long they  
    watch'd in vain,

For seldom did she go to chapel shrift,

    And seldom felt she any hunger pain,  
And when she left, she hurried back, as  
    swift

    As bird on wing to breast its eggs again  
And, patient as a hen bird, sat her there  
Beside\* her Basil, weeping through her  
    hair

Yet they contrived to steal the Basil pot,

    And to examine it in secret place

The thing was vile with green and livid  
    spot,

    And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's  
    face

The guerdon of their murder they had  
    got,

    And so left Florence in a moment's  
    space,

Never to turn again — Away they went,  
With blood upon their heads, to banish-  
    ment



## ISABELLA

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away!

O Musie, Musie, breathe despondingly!

O Echo, Echo, on some other day,

From isles Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!

Spirits of grief, sing not your "Well-a-way!"

For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die;

Will die a death too lone and incomplete,

Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless things,

Asking for her lost Basil amorously:

And with melodious chuckle in the strings

Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry

After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,

To ask him where her Basil was; and why

'Twas hid from her: "For cruel 'tis," said she,

"To steal my Basil-pot away from me."

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,

Imploring for her Basil to the last.

No heart was there in Florence but did mourn

In pity of her love, so overcast.

## *ISABELLA*

And a sad ditty of this story borne

From mouth to mouth through all the  
country pass'd.

Still is the burthen sung—"O cruelty,

To steal my Basil-pot away from me!"

## The Eve of St. Agnes



St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!  
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-  
cold;  
The hare limp'd trembling through the  
frozen grass,  
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers while  
he told  
His rosary, and while his frosted\*breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old,  
Seem'd taking flight for heaven with-  
out a death,  
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his  
prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy  
man;  
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his  
knees,  
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot,  
wan,  
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:  
The sculptured dead, on each side seem  
to freeze,

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:  
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb ora-  
t'ries,

He passeth by; and his weak spirit  
fails

To think how they may ache in icy hoods  
and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little  
door,

And scarce three steps, ere Music's  
golden tongue

Flatter'd to tears this aged man and  
poor;

But no—already had his death-bell rung;  
The joys of, all his life were said and  
sung:

His was harsh penance on St. Agnes'  
Eve:

Another way he went, and soon among  
Rough ashes sat he for 'his soul's re-  
prieve,

And all night kept awake, for sinner's  
sake to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the pre-  
lude soft;

And so it chanced, for many a door was  
wide,

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to  
chide:

The level chambers, ready with their  
pride,

Were glowing to receive a thousand  
guests:

The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
Stared, where upon their heads the  
cornice rests,

With hair blown back, and wings put  
cross-wise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
Numerous as shadows haunting fairily  
The brain, new-stuff'd, in youth, with  
triumphs gay

Of old romance. These let us wish  
away,

And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady  
there,

Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry  
day,

On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly  
care,

As she had heard old dames full many  
times declare.

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
And soft adorings from their loves receive  
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,  
If ceremonies due they did aright;  
As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
And couch supine their beauties, lily white,  
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Made-line:  
The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,  
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train  
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain  
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,  
And back retired, not cool'd by high disdain;  
But she saw not: her heart was other-where;  
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

She danced along with vague, regard-  
less eyes,  
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick  
and short:  
The hallow'd hour was near at hand:  
she sighs  
Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd  
resort  
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;  
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and  
scorn,  
Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amorn,  
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs un-  
shorn,  
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow  
morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
She linger'd still. Meantime, across  
the moors,  
Had come young Porphyro, with heart  
on fire  
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he,  
and implores  
All saints to give him sight of Made-  
line,  
But for one moment in the tedious  
hours,

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

That he might gaze and worship all  
unseen,  
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in  
sooth such things have been

He ventures in let no buzz'd whisper  
tell  
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
Will storm his heart, Love's feverous  
citadel  
For him, those chambers held barbarian  
hordes,  
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
Whose very dogs would execrations  
howl  
Against his lineage not one breast  
affords  
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,  
Save one old beldame, weak in body and  
in soul

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature  
came,  
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
To where he stood, hid from the torch's  
flame,  
Behind a broad hall pillar, far beyond  
The sound of merriment and chorus  
blind



## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

He startled her; but soon she knew his  
face,  
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied  
hand,  
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee  
from this place;  
They are all here to-night, the whole  
bloodthirsty race!

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish  
Hildebrand:  
He had a fever late, and in the fit  
He cursed thee and thine, both house  
and land:  
Then there's that old Lord Maurice,  
not a whit  
More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me!  
flit!  
Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah, Gossip  
dear,  
We're safe enough; here in this arm-  
chair sit,  
And tell me how"—"Good Saints! not  
here, not here;  
Follow me, child, or else these stones will  
be thy bier."

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,  
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty  
plume;

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

And as she mutter'd "Well-a—well-a-day!"

He found him in a little moonlight room,  
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.

"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,

"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom  
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,

When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving  
piously."

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve—  
Yet men will murder upon holy days:  
Thou must hold water in a witch's  
sieve,

And be liege-lord of all the Elves and  
Fays,

To venture so: it fills me with amaze  
To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes'  
Eve!

God's help! my lady fair the conjuror  
plays

This very night: good angels her de-  
ceive!

But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time  
to grieve."

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

Feebly she laugheth in the languid  
    moon,  
While Porphyro upon her face doth  
    look,  
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
Who keepeth closed a wondrous riddle-  
    book,  
As spectacl'd she sits in chimney nook.  
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when  
    she told  
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could  
    brook  
Tears, at the thought of those enchant-  
    ments cold,  
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends  
    old.

Sudden a thought came like a full-  
    blown rose,  
Flushing his brow, and in his pained  
    heart  
Made purple riot: then doth he propose  
A stratagem, that makes the beldame  
    start:  
"A cruel man and impious thou art:  
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep and  
    dream  
Alone with her good angels, far apart

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

From wicked men like thee. Go, Go!  
I deem  
Thou canst not surely be the same that  
thou didst seem."

"I will not harm her, by all saints I  
swear,"  
Quoth Porphyro. "O may I ne'er find  
grace  
When my weak voice shall whisper its  
last prayer,  
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,  
Or look with ruffian passion in her  
face:  
Good Angela, believe me by these tears,  
Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's  
ears,  
And beard them, though they be more  
fang'd than wolves and bears "

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble  
soul?  
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, church-  
yard thing,  
Whose passing-bell may ere the mid-  
night toll;  
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and  
evening,

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

Were never miss'd." Thus plaining,   
 doth she bring  
A gentler speech from burning Por-  
phyro;  
So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing,  
That Angela gives promise she will do  
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal  
or woe.

Which was, to lead him, in close  
secrecy,  
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there  
hide  
Him in a closet, of such privacy  
That he might see her beauty unespied,  
And win perhaps that night a peerless  
bride,  
While legion'd fairies paced the cover-  
let,  
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-  
eyed.  
Never on such a night have lovers met,  
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the  
monstrous debt.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the  
Dame:

"All cates and dainties shall be stored  
there

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

Quickly on this feast-night: by the  
tambour frame  
Her own lute thou wilt see: no time  
to spare,  
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce  
dare  
On such a catering trust my dizzy  
head.  
Wait here, my child, with patience  
kneel in prayer  
The while: Ah! thou must needs the  
lady wed,  
Or may I never leave my grave among  
the dead."

So saying she hobbled off with busy  
fear.  
The lover's endless minutes slowly  
pass'd;  
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in  
his ear  
To follow her; with aged eyes aghast  
From fright of dim espial. Safe at  
last,  
Through many a dusky gallery, they  
gain  
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd  
and chaste;

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

Where Porphyro took covert, pleased,  
amain.

His poor guide hurried back with agues  
in her brain.

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade  
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,  
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed  
maid,

Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:  
With silver taper's light, and pious  
care,

She turn'd, and down the aged gossip  
led

To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that  
bed;

She comes, she comes again, like ring-  
dove fray'd and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;  
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine,  
died:

She closed the door, she panted, all  
akin

To spirits of the air, and visions wide:  
No utter'd syllable, or, woe betide!

But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
Paining with eloquence her balmy side:

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

As though a tongueless nightingale  
should swell

Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled,  
in her dell.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there  
was,

All garlanded with carven imageries  
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of  
knot-grass,

And diamonded with panes of quaint  
device,

Innumerable of stains and splendid  
dyes,

As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd  
wings;

And in the midst, 'mong thousand  
heraldries,

And twilight saints, and dim emblazon-  
ings,

A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood  
of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry  
moon,

And threw warm gules on Madeline's  
fair breast,

As down she knelt for Heaven's grace  
and boon;



## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together  
    prest,  
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:  
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly  
    drest,  
Save wings, for heaven:— Porphyro  
    grew faint:  
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from  
    mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers,  
    done,  
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she  
    frees;  
Uncclasps her warmed jewels one by  
    one;  
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by de-  
    grees  
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her  
    knees:  
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-  
    weed,  
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and  
    sees,  
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,  
But dares not look behind, or all the  
    charm is fled.

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES .

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly  
nest,  
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she  
lay,  
Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd  
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued  
away;  
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-  
day;  
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and  
pain;  
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Pay-  
nim's pray;  
Blinded alike from sunshine and from  
rain,  
As though a rose should shut, and be a  
bud again.

Stolen to this paradise, and so en-  
tranced,  
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,  
And listen'd to her breathing, if it  
chanced  
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;  
Which when he heard, that minute did  
he bless,  
And breathed himself: then from the  
closet crept,  
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,  
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where,  
lo!—how fast she slept.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded  
moon

Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
A table, and, half-anguish'd, threw  
thereon

A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and  
jet:—

O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!  
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clario-  
net,

Affray his ears, though but in dying  
tone:—

The hall-door shuts again, and all the  
noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
In blanched linen, smooth, and laven-  
der'd,

While he from forth the closet brought  
a heap

Of candied apple, quince, and plum,  
and gourd;

With jellies soother than the creamy-  
curd,

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

And lucent syrops, tinct with cinna-  
mon;  
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every  
one,  
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Leba-  
non.

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing  
hand  
On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they  
stand  
In the retired quiet of the night,  
Filling the chilly room with perfume  
light.—  
“And now, my love, my seraph fair,  
awake!  
Thou art my heaven, and I thine ere-  
mite:  
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes'  
sake,  
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul  
doth ache.”

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved  
arm  
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her  
dream

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

By the dusk curtains:—'t was a mid-  
night charm

Impossible to melt as iced stream:

The lustrous salvers in the moonlight  
gleam;

Broad golden fringe upon the carpet  
lies:

It seem'd he never, never could redeem  
From such a steadfast spell his lady's  
eyes;

So muséd awhile, entoil'd in woofed  
phantasies.

Awakening up, he took her hollow  
lute,—

Tumultuous,—and, in chords that ten-  
derest be,

He play'd an ancient ditty, long since  
mute,

In Provence call'd "La belle dame sans  
mercy":

Close to her ear touching the melody;—  
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft  
moan:

He ceased—she panted quick—and sud-  
denly

Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:  
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-  
sculptured stone.

## THE EVE OF ST AGNES

Her eyes were open, but she still be-  
held,  
Now wide awake, the vision of her  
sleep  
There was a painful change, that night  
expell'd  
The blisses of her dream so pure and  
deep  
At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
And moan forth witless words with  
many a sigh,  
While still her gaze on Porphyro would  
keep,  
Who knelt, with joined hands and  
piteous eye,  
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so  
dreamingly

“Ah, Porphyro!” said she, “but even  
now  
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine  
ear,  
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow,  
And those sad eyes were spiritual and  
clear  
How changed thou art! how pallid,  
chill, and drear!  
Give me that voice again, my Por-  
phyro,

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

Those looks immortal, those complain-  
ings dear!

Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,  
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not  
where to go."

yond a mortal man impassion'd far  
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing  
star

Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep  
repose:

Into her dream he melted, as the rose  
Blendeth its odour with the violet,—  
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-  
wind blows

Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp  
sleet

Against the window-panes; St. Agnes'  
moon hath set.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-  
blown sleet:

"This is no dream, my bride, my  
Madeline!"

'Tis dark: the icy gusts still rave and  
beat:

"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is  
mine!

Porphyro will leave me here to fade  
and pine.—

## THE EVE OF ST AGNES

Cruel! what traitor could thee hither  
bring?

I curse not, for my heart is lost in  
thine,

Though thou forsakest a deceived  
thing,—

A dove forlorn and lost with sick un-  
pruned wing

“My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely  
bride!

Say may I be for aye thy vassal blest?  
Thy beauty's shield heart shaped and  
vermilion dyed?

Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my  
rest

After so many hours of toil and quest,  
A famished pilgrim—saved by miracle  
Though I have found I will not rob  
thy nest

Saving of thy sweet self, if thou think'st  
well

To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude in-  
fidel

“Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery  
land

Of haggard seeming but a boon in  
deed



## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—  
The bloated wassailers will never heed:—  
Let us away, my love, with happy  
speed;

There are no ears to hear, or eyes to  
see,—

Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy  
mead:

Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,  
For o'er the southern moors I have a  
home for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with  
fears,

For there were sleeping dragons all  
around,

At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready  
spears—

Down the wide stairs a darkling way  
they found,

In all the house was heard no human  
sound.

A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by  
each door;

The arras, rich with horseman, hawk,  
and hound,

Flutter'd in the besieging wind's up-  
roar;

And the long carpets rose along the gusty  
floor.

## THE EVE OF ST AGNES

They glide, like phantoms, into the  
wide hall  
Like phantoms to the iron porch they  
glide,  
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
With a huge empty flagon by his side  
The wakeful blood hound rose, and  
shook his hide,  
But his sagacious eye in inmate owns  
By one, and one, the bolts full easy  
slide —  
The chains lie silent on the foot worn  
stones,  
The key turns, and the door upon its  
hinges groans

And they are gone ay ages long ago  
These lovers fled away into the storm  
That night the Baron dreamt of many  
a woe,  
And all his warrior-guests, with shade  
and form  
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-  
worm,  
Were long be-nightmared Angela the  
old  
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face  
deform,

## *THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*

The Beadsman, after thousand aves,  
told,  
For aye unsought-for slept among his  
ashes cold.

Ode to a  
Nightingale



My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness  
pains

My sense, as though of hemlock I had  
drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had  
sunk:

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thy happiness,—  
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the  
trees,

In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green, and shadows number-  
less,  
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath  
been  
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved  
earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,  
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-  
burnt mirth!

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippo-  
crene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the  
brim,  
And purple-stained mouth;  
That I might drink, and leave the world  
unseen,  
And with thee fade into the forest  
dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never  
known,  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each  
other groan;  
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray  
hairs,  
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-  
thin, and dies;  
Where but to think is to be full of  
sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs;  
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous  
eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond  
to-morrow.

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Away I away ! for I will fly to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
Though the dull brain perplexes and  
retards  
Already with thee! tender is the night,  
And hapsly the Queen Moon is on her  
throne,  
Cluster'd around by all her starry  
Fays,  
But here there is no light  
Save what from heaven is with the  
breezes blown  
Through verdurous glooms and wind  
ing mossy ways

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the  
boughs,  
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each  
sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable month en-  
dows  
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit tree  
wild,  
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eg-  
lantine,  
Fast-fading violets cover'd up in  
leaves,  
And mid May's eldest child,

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

The coming musk-rosè, full of dewy ,  
wine,

The murmurous haunt of flies on  
summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time  
I have been half in love with easeful  
Death,

Call'd him soft names in many a mused  
rhyme,

To take into the air my quiet breath;  
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
To cease upon the midnight with no  
pain,

While thou art pouring forth thy  
soul abroad

In such an ecstasy!

Still wouldst thou sing, and I have  
ears in vain—

To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal  
Bird!

No hungry generations tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this passing night was  
heard

In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a  
path

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

Through the sad heart of Ruth, when,  
sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien  
corn;

The same that oft-times hath  
Charm'd magic casements, opening on  
the foam

Of perilous seas, in faery lands for-  
lorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell

To toll me back from thee to my sole  
self.

Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well

As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades

Past the near meadows, over the still  
stream,

Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried  
deep

In the next valley-glades:

Was it a vision, or a waking dream?

Fled is that music:—do I wake or  
sleep?



Ode on a  
Grecian Urn



Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness!  
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow  
Time,  
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
A flowery tale more sweetly than our  
rhyme:  
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about  
thy shape  
Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?  
What men or gods are these? what  
maidens loath?  
What mad pursuit? What struggle to  
escape?  
What pipes and timbrels? What wild  
ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those un-  
heard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes,  
play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more en-  
dear'd,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:

## ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst  
not leave

Thy song, nor ever can those trees be  
bare,

Bold Lover, never, never canst thou  
kiss,

Though winning near the goal—yet, do  
not grieve,

She cannot fade, though thou hast  
not thy bliss,

For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot  
shed

Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring  
adieu,

And happy melodist, unwearied,

For ever piping songs for ever new,

More happy love! more happy, happy  
love!

For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,

For ever panting and for ever young,

All breathing human passion far above,

That leaves a heart high sorrowful and  
cloy'd,

A burning forehead, and a parching  
tongue

## ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?

To what green altar, O mysterious  
priest,

Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the  
skies,

And all her silken flanks with garlands  
drest?

What little town by river or sea-shore,

Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?

And, little town, thy streets for evermore

Will silent be; and not a soul to tell

Why thou art desolate, can e'er re-  
turn.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede

Of marble men and maidens over-  
wrought,

With forest branches and the trodden  
weed;

Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of  
thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

When old age shall this generation  
waste,

Thou shalt remain, in midst of other  
woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom  
thou say'st,

*ODE ON A GRECIAN URN*

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty”,—that is  
all  
Ye’ know on earth, and all ye need  
to know.

## To Autumn



Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!

Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and  
bless

With fruit the vines that round the  
thatch-eaves run;

To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-  
trees,

And fill all fruit with ripeness to the  
core;

To swell the gourd, and plump the  
hazel shells

With a sweet kernel; to set budding  
more,

And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never  
cease,

For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their  
clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy  
store?

Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may  
find

## TO AUTUMN

Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing  
wind;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drowsed with the fume of poppies,  
while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its  
twined flowers;  
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost  
keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook;  
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours  
by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay,  
where are they?  
Think not of them, thou hast thy music  
too,  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying  
day,  
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy  
hue;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats  
mourn  
Among the river sallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or  
dies;

## TO AUTUMN

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from  
hilly bourn;

Hedge-cricket sing; and now with  
treble soft

The redbreast whistles from a garden-  
croft,

And gathering swallows twitter in  
the skies.

Ode on  
Melancholy



No, no! go not to Lethe, neither twist  
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poison-  
ous wine,

Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd  
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proser-  
pine,

Make not your rosary of yew-berries,  
Nor let the beetle, nor the death moth  
be

Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy  
owl

A partner in your sorrow's mysteries,  
For shade to shade will come too  
drowsily,

And drown the wakeful anguish of  
the soul

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
Sudden from heaven like a weeping  
cloud,

That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
And hides the green hill in an April  
shroud,



## ODE ON MELANCHOLY

Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-  
wave,  
Or on the wealth of globed peonies;  
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
Emprison her soft hand, and let her  
rave,  
And feed deep, deep upon her peetless  
eyes.

She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that  
must die;  
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his  
lips  
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth  
sips:  
Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,  
Though seen of none save him whose  
strenuous tongue  
Can burst Joy's grape against his  
palate fine;  
His soul shall taste the sadness of her  
might,  
And be among her cloudy trophies  
hung.

Ode to  
Psyche



O goddess! heark these tuneless numbers  
    wrung

By sweet enforcement and remembrance  
    dear,

And pardon that thy secrets should be  
    sung,

Even into thine own soft-conched ear:

Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see

The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes?

I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,

And, on the sudden, fainting with sur-  
    prise,

Saw two fair creatures couched side by side

In deepest grass beneath the whispering  
    roof

Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where  
    there ran

    A brooklet, scarce espied.

Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers fragrant-  
    eyed,

Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,

They lay calm-sleeping on the bedded  
    grass;

## ODE TO PSYCHE

Their arms embraced and their pinions  
too;

Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade  
adieu,

As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,  
And ready still past kisses to outnumber  
At tender eye-dawn of Aurorean love:

The winged boy I knew;

But who wast thou, O happy, happy  
dove?

His Psyche true!

O latest-born and loveliest vision far  
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!  
Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd star  
Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the  
sky;

Fairer than these, though temple thou hast  
none,

Nor altar heap'd with flowers;  
Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan  
Upon the midnight hours;

No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet  
From chain-swung censer teeming;

No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat  
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

O brightest! though too late for antique  
vows,

Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,

## ODE TO PSYCHE

Holy the air, the water, and the fire  
Yet even in these days so far retired  
From happy pieties, thy lucent firs  
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,  
I see and sing by my own eyes inspired  
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan  
Upon the midnight hours!  
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense  
sweet  
From swung censer teeming,  
Thy shrine thy grove thy oracle, thy heat  
Of pale mouth'd prophet dreaming

Yes, I will be thy priest and build a fane  
In some untrodden region of my mind,  
Where branched thoughts new-grown  
with pleasant pain  
Instead of pines shall murmur in the  
wind  
Far, far around shall these dark cluster'd  
trees  
Fledge the wild ridged mountains steep  
by steep,  
And there by zephyrs streams, and birds  
and bees  
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to  
sleep,  
And in the midst of this wide quietness  
A rosy sanctuary will I dress

## ODE TO PSYCHE

With the wreath'd trellis of a working  
brain,

With buds, and bells, and stars with-  
out a name,

With all the gardener Fancy e'er could  
feign,

Who, breeding flowers, will never breed  
the same:

And there shall be for thee all soft delight  
That shadowy thought can win,

A bright torch, and a casement ope at  
night

To let the warm Love in!









## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
She look'd at me as she did love.  
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
And nothing else saw all day long,  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild, and manna dew,  
And sure in language strange she said—  
“I love thee true”.

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore,  
And there I shut her wild wild eyes  
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,  
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide  
The latest dream I ever dream'd  
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;  
They cried—“La Belle Dame sans Merci  
Hath thee in thrall!”

*LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCE*

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke and found me here  
On the cold hill's side

And this is why I sojourn here,  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is wither'd from the  
lake,  
And no birds sing.

## The Enchanted Serpent



FROM "LAMIA"

She was a gordian shape of dazzling  
hue,  
Vermilion - spotted, golden, green, and  
blue;  
Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,  
Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson  
barr'd;  
And full of silver moons, that, as she  
breathed,  
Dissolved, or brighter shone, or inter-  
wreathed  
Their lustres with the gloonier tapes-  
tries—  
So rainbow-sided, touch'd with miseries,  
She seem'd at once some penanced lady  
elf,  
Some demon's mistress, or the demon's  
self.  
Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire  
Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar:

## THE ENCHANTED SERPENT

Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-  
sweet!

She had a woman's mouth with all its  
pearls complete

And for her eyes—what could such eyes  
do there

But weep, and weep, that they were born  
so fair?

As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian  
air

Her throat was serpent, but the words  
she spake

Came, as through bubbling honey, for  
Love's sake

And thus, while Hermes on his pinions  
lay,

Like a stoop'd falcon ere he takes his  
prey

“Fair Hermes! crown'd with feathers,  
fluttering light,

I had a splendid dream of thee last night,  
I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold,  
Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,  
The only sad one, for thou didst not hear  
The soft, lute-finger'd Muses chanting  
clear,

Nor even Apollo when he sang alone  
Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long  
melodious moan

## THE ENCHANTED SERPENT

I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple  
flakes,

Break amorous through the clouds, as  
morning breaks,

And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean dart,  
Strike for the Cretan isle; and here thou  
art!

Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the  
maid?"

Whereat the star of Lethe not delay'd  
His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired:

"Thou smooth-lipp'd serpent, surely high-  
inspired!

Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy  
eyes,

Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise,  
Telling me only where my nymph is  
fled,—

Where she doth breathe!"—"Bright planet,  
thou hast said,"

Return'd the snake, "but seal with oaths,  
fair God!"

"I swear," said Hermes, "by my serpent  
rod,

And by thine eyes, and thy starry crown!"  
Light flew his earnest words, among the  
blossoms blown.

Then thus again the brilliance feminine:

"Too frail of heart! for this lost nymph  
of thine,

## THE ENCHANTED SERPENT

Free as the air, invisibly, she strays  
About these thornless wilds; her pleasant  
days

She tastes unseen; unseen her nimble feet  
Leave traces in the grass and flowers  
sweet:

From weary tendrils, and bow'd branches  
green,

She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes  
unseen:

And by my power is her beauty veil'd  
To keep it unaffronted, unassail'd  
By the love-glances of unlovely eyes  
Of Satyrs, Fauns, and blear'd Silenus'  
sighs.

Pale grew her immortality, for woe  
Of all these lovers, and she grieved so  
I took compassion on her, bide her steep  
Her hair in weird syrops, that would  
keep

Her loveliness invisible, yet free  
To wander as she loves, in liberty.

Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou  
alone,

If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my  
boon!"

Then, once again, the charmed God began  
An oath, and through the serpent's ears  
it ran

Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.

## THE ENCHANTED SERPENT

Ravish'd she lifted her Circean head,  
Blush'd a live damask, and swift-lipping  
said,

"I was a woman, let me have once  
more

A woman's shape, and charming as  
before.

I love a youth of Corinth—O the bliss!  
Give me my woman's form, and place me  
where he is.

Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy  
brow,

And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even  
now."

The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,  
She breathed upon his eyes, and swift  
was seen

Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling  
on the green.

It was no dream; or say a dream it  
was,

Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly  
pass

Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.  
One warm, flush'd moment, hovering, it  
might seem

Dash'd by the wood-nymph's beauty, so  
he burn'd;

Then, lighting on the printless verdure,  
turn'd

## THE ENCHANTED SERPENT

To the swoon'd serpent, and with languid  
arm,  
Delicate, put to proof the lithe Caducean  
charm.

Left to herself, the serpent now began  
To change; her elfin blood in madness  
ran,  
Her mouth foam'd, and the grass, there-  
with besprent,  
Wither'd at dew so sweet and virulent;  
Her eyes in torture fix'd, and anguish  
drear,  
Hot, glazed, and wide, with lid-lashes all  
sear,  
Flash'd phosphor and sharp sparks, with-  
out one cooling tear.  
The colours all inflamed throughout her  
train,  
She writhed about, convulsed with scarlet  
pain:  
A deep volcanian yellow took the place  
Of all her milder-mooned body's grace;  
And, as the lava ravishes the mead,  
Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden  
brede:  
Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks  
and bars,  
Eclipsed her crescents, and 'lick'd up her  
stars:



## THE ENCHANTED SERPENT

So that, in moments few, she was 'undrest

Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,  
And rubious-argent: of all these bereft,  
Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.  
Still shone her crown; that vanish'd, also  
she

Melted and disappear'd as suddenly;  
And in the air, her new voice luting soft,  
Cried, "Lycius! gentle Lycius!"—borne  
aloft

With the bright mists about the mountains hoar

These words dissolved: Crete's forests  
heard no more.

## The Banquet

FROM "LANIA"

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-  
room,  
Fill'd with pervading brilliance and per-  
fume.  
Before each lucid panel fuming stood  
A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,  
Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,  
Whose slender feet wide-swerved upon  
the soft  
Wool-woofed carpets: fifty wreaths of  
smoke  
From fifty censers their light voyage took  
To the high roof, still mimick'd as they  
rose  
Along the mirror'd walls by twin-clouds  
odorous.  
Twelve sphered tables by silk seats in-  
sphered,  
High as the level of a man's breast  
rear'd  
On libbard's paws, upheld the heavy gold  
Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice  
told

## THE BANQUET

Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels,  
wine  
Came from the gloomy tun with merry  
shine.  
Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,  
Each shrining in the midst the image  
of a God.

When in an antechamber every guest  
Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure  
press'd,  
By ministering slaves, upon his hands  
and feet,  
And fragrant oils with ceremony meet  
Pour'd on his hair, they all moved to the  
feast  
In white robes, and themselves in order  
placed  
Around the silken couches, wondering  
Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of  
wealth could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,  
While fluent Greek a vowel'd under-song  
Kept up among the guests, discoursing  
low  
At first, for scarcely was the wine at  
flow;

## THE BANQUET

But when the happy vintage touch'd their  
    brains  
Louder they talk, and louder come the  
    strains  
Of powerful instruments —the gorgeous  
    dyes,  
The space, the splendour of the draperies,  
The roof of awful richness, nectarous  
    cheer,  
Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, ap-  
    pear,  
Now, when the wine' has done its rosy,  
    deed,  
And every soul from human trammels  
    freed,  
No more so strange, for merry wine,  
    sweet wine,  
Will make Elysian shades not too fair,  
    too divine  
Soon was God Bacchus at meridian  
    height,  
Flush'd were their cheeks, and bright  
    eyes double bright  
Garlands of every green, and every scent  
From vales deflower'd, or forest-trees  
    branch rent,  
In baskets of bright osier'd gold were  
    brought  
High as the handles heap'd, to suit the  
    thought

## *THE BANQUET*

Of every guest; that each, as he did  
    please,  
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillow'd at  
    his ease.

On first looking  
into Chapman's  
Homer



Much have I travell'd in the realms of  
gold  
And many goodly states and kingdoms  
seen,  
Round many western islands have I  
been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his  
demesne  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chipman speak out loud and  
bold  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken,  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific—and all his  
men  
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien

## On a Picture of Leander



Come hither, all sweet maidens soberly,  
Down-looking aye, and with a chasten'd  
light

Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,  
And meekly let your fair hands joined be,  
As if so gentle that ye could not see,  
Untouch'd, a victim of your beauty  
bright,

Sinking away to his young spirit's night,  
Sinking bewilder'd 'mid the dreary sea:

'Tis young Leander toiling to his death;  
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary  
lips

For Hero's cheek, and smiles against her  
smile.

O horrid dream! see how his body dips  
Dead-heavy; arms and shoulders gleam  
awhile:

He's gone; up bubbles all his amorous  
breath!

## On a Dream

As Hermes once took to his feathers light,  
When lulled Argus, baffled, swoon'd  
and slept,

So on a Delphic reed, my idle spright  
So play'd, so charm'd, so conquer'd, so  
bereft

The dragon-world of all its hundred eyes;  
And seeing it asleep, so fled away,  
Not to pure Ida with its snow-cold skies,  
Nor unto Tempe, where Jove grieved a  
day,

But to that second circle of sad Hell,  
Where in' the gust, the whirlwind, and  
the flaw

Of rain and hailstones, lovers need not  
tell

Their sorrows,—pale were the sweet  
lips I saw,

Pale were the lips I kiss'd, and fair the  
form

I floated with, about that melancholy  
storm.



## The Day is Gone

The day is gone, and all its sweets are  
gone!

Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and  
softer breast,

Warm breath, light whisper, tender semi-  
tone,

Bright eyes, accomplish'd shape, and  
lang'rous waist!

Faded the flower and all its budded charms,

Faded the sight of beauty from my eyes,

Faded the shape of beauty from my arms,

Faded the voice, warmth, whiteness,  
paradise—

Vanished unseasonably at shut of eve,

When the dusk holiday—or holineight—

Of fragrant-curtain'd love begins to weave

The woof of darkness thick, for hid  
delight;

But, as I've read love's missal through  
to-day,

He'll let me sleep, seeing I fast and pray.

## On the Elgin Marbles



My spirit is too weak, mortality  
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling  
sleep,  
And each imagined pinnacle and steep  
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die  
Like a sick eagle looking at the sky  
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep,  
That I have not the cloudy winds to  
keep  
Fresh for the opening of the morning's  
eye  
Such dim-conceived glories of the brain  
Bring round the heart an indescribable  
feud,  
So do these wonders a most dizzy pun,  
That mingles Grecian grandeur with  
the rude  
Wasting of old Time— with a billowy  
main,  
A sun, a shadow of a magnitude

## To a Lady

Time's sea hath been five years at its slow  
ebb;

Long hours have to and fro let creep the  
sand;

Since I was tangled in thy beauty's web,  
And snared by the ungloving of thine  
hand.

And yet I never look on midnight sky,  
But I behold thine eyes' well memoried  
light;

I cannot look upon the rose's dye,  
But to thy cheek my soul doth take its  
flight;

I cannot look on any budding flower,  
But my fond ear, in fancy at thy lips,  
And harkening for a love-sound, doth  
devour

Its sweets in the wrong sense:—Thou  
dost eclipse

Every delight with sweet remembering,  
And grief unto my darling joys dost bring.

## To Sleep



O soft embalmer of the still midnight,  
Shutting with careful fingers and benign,  
Our gloom pleased eyes, embowered from  
the light,  
Unshaded in forgetfulness divine,  
O soothing Sleep! if so it please thee, close,  
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing  
eyes,  
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws  
Around my bed its lulling charities,  
Then save me, or the pained day will  
shine  
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes,  
Save me from curious conscience, that  
still lords  
Its strength for darkness burrowing like  
a mole,  
Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,  
And seal the hushed casket of my soul

## Why Did I Laugh?

Why did I laugh to-night? No voice will  
tell:

No God, no Demon of severe response,  
Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell.

Then to my human heart I turn at once.  
Heart! Thou and I are here, sad and  
alone;

I say, why did I laugh? O mortal pain!  
O Darkness! Darkness! ever must I  
moan,

To question Heaven and Hell and Heart  
in vain.

Why did I laugh? I know this Being's  
lease

My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads;  
Yet would I on this very midnight cease,  
And the world's gaudy ensigns see in  
shreds;

Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense  
indeed,

But Death intenser—Death is Life's high  
meed.

If by Dull  
Rhymes



If by dull rhymes our English must be  
chained,

And, like Andromeda, the Sonnet sweet  
Fettered, in spite of pined loveliness;

Let us find out, if we must be constrained,  
Sandals more interwoven and complete  
To fit the naked foot of poesy,

Let us inspect the lyre, and weigh the  
stress

Of every chord, and see what may be  
gained

By ear industrious, and attention meet;  
Misers of sound and syllable, no less

Than Midas of his coinage, let us be  
Jealous of dead leaves in the bay-wreath  
crown;

So, if we may not let the Muse be free,  
She will be bound with garlands of her  
own.

, \*

To my Brother  
George



Many the wonders I this day have seen:  
The Sun, when first he kist away the  
tears  
That filled the eyes of Morn;—the lau-  
relled peers  
Who from the feathery gold of evening  
lean;—  
The Ocean with its vastness, its blue green,  
Its ships, its rocks, its caves, its hopes,  
its fears,—  
Its voice mysterious, which whoso hears  
Must think on what will be, and what has  
been.  
E'en now, dear George, while this for you  
I write,  
Cynthia is from her silken curtains  
peeping  
So scanty, that it seems her bridal night,  
And she her half-discovered revels keep-  
ing.  
But what, without the social thought of  
thee,  
Would be the wonders of the sky and sea?

To . . .



Had I a man's fair form, then might my  
sighs  
Be echoed swiftly through that ivory  
shell  
Thine ear, and find thy gentle heart, so  
well  
Would passion arm me for the enterprise  
But ah! I am no knight whose foeman  
dies,  
No cuirass glistens on my bosom's swell,  
I am no happy shepherd of the dell  
Whose lips have trembled with a maiden's  
eyes  
Yet must I dote upon thee—call thee  
sweet,  
Sweeter by far than Hybla's homed roses  
When steeped in dew rich to intoxication  
Ah! I will taste that dew, for me 't is meet,  
And when the moon her pallid face dis  
closes,  
I'll gather some by spells and incan  
tation



## How Many Bards

How many bards gild the lapses of time!

A few of them have ever been the food  
Of my delighted fancy,—I could brood  
Over their beauties, earthly or sublime:  
And often when I sit me down to rhyme,  
These will in throngs before my mind  
intrude:

But no confusion, no disturbance rude  
Do they occasion; 'tis a pleasing chime.  
So the unnumbered sounds that evening  
store;

The songs of birds—the whispering of  
the leaves—

The voice of waters—the great bell that  
heaves

With solemn sound—and thousand others  
more,

That distance of recognizance bereaves,  
Make pleasing music, and not wild uproar.

To a Friend  
who sent me  
some Roses



+

As late I rambled in the happy fields,  
What time the skylark shakes the  
tremulous dew  
From his lush clover covert; when anew  
Adventurous knights take up their dinted  
shields;  
I saw the sweetest flower wild nature  
yields,  
A fresh-blown musk rose; 't was the first  
that threw  
Its sweets upon the summer: graceful  
it grew  
As is the wand that queen Titania wields.  
And, as I feasted on its fragrancy,  
I thought the garden-rose it far excelled:  
But when, O Wells! thy roses came to me,  
My sense with their deliciousness was  
spelled:  
Soft voices had they, that with tender plea  
Whispered of peace, and truth, and  
friendliness unquelled.

## Solitude



O Solitude! if I must with thee dwell,  
Let it not be among the jumbled heap  
Of murky buildings; climb with me the  
steep,—  
Nature's observatory—whence the dell,  
Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell,  
May seem a span; let me thy vigils keep  
'Mongst boughs pavilioned, where the  
deer's swift leap  
Startles the wild bee from the foxglove bell.  
But though I'll gladly trace these scenes  
with thee,  
Yet the sweet converse of an innocent  
mind,  
'hose words are images of thoughts re-  
fined,  
Is my soul's pleasure; and it sure must be  
most the highest bliss of human-kind,  
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits  
flee.

To G. A. W.



Nymph of the downward smile, and side-  
long glance!

In what diviner moments of the day  
Art thou most lovely? When gone far  
astray

Into the labyrinths of sweet utterance?

Or when serenely wandering in a trance  
Of sober thought? Or when starting  
away,

With careless robe, to meet the morning  
ray,

Thou spar'st the flowers in thy mazy dance?

Haply 'tis when thy ruby lips part sweetly,

And so remain, because thou listenest,

But thou to please wert nurtured so com-  
pletely

That I can never tell what mood is best  
I shall as soon pronounce which Grace  
more neatly

Trips it before Apollo than the rest

## Wayfaring



Keen, fitful gusts are whispering here and  
there

Among the bushes, half leafless and dry;

The stars look very cold about the sky,

And I have many miles on foot to fare;

Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,

Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,

Or of those silver lamps that burn on  
high,

Or of the distance from home's pleasant  
lair;

For I am brimful of the friendliness

That in a little cottage I have found;

Of fair-haired Milton's eloquent distress,

And all his love for gentle Lycid drowned;

Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,

And faithful Petrarch gloriously crowned.

## Escape from the City



To one who has been long in city pent  
    'Tis very sweet to look into the fair  
    And open face of heaven,—to breathe a  
        prayer  
Full in the smile of the blue firmament  
Who is more happy, when, with heart's  
    content,  
    Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant  
        lair  
    Of wavy grass, and reads a debonaire  
And gentle tale of love and languishment?  
Returning home at evening, with an ear  
    Catching the notes of Philomel,—an  
        eye  
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright  
    career,  
    He mourns that day so soon has glided  
        by  
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear  
    That falls through the clear ether  
        silently

On Leaving some  
Friends at an  
Early Hour



3

Give me a golden pen, and let me lean  
On heaped-up flowers, in regions clear,  
and far;

Bring me a tablet whiter than a star,  
Or hand of hymning angel, when 't is seen  
The silver strings of heavenly harp atween:

And let there glide by many a pearly  
car,

Pink robes, and wavy hair, and dia-  
mond jar,

And half-discovered wings, and glances  
keen.

The while let music wander round my  
ears,

And as it reaches each delicious ending,  
Let me write down a line of glorious  
tone,

And full of many wonders of the spheres:  
For what a height my spirit is contend-  
ing!

'Tis not content so soon to be alone.

Addressed  
to Haydon



Great spirits now on earth are sojourning;  
He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide  
awake,  
Catches his freshness from Archangel's  
wing:  
He of the rose, the violet, the spring,  
The social smile, the chain for Free-  
dom's sake:  
And lo!—whose steadfastness would  
never take  
A meaner sound than Raphael's whisper-  
ing.  
And other spirits there are standing apart  
Upon the forehead of the age to come;  
These, these will give the world another  
heart,  
And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum  
Of mighty workings?—  
Listen awhile, ye nations, and be dumb.



## On the Grasshopper and Cricket

The poetry of earth is never dead:

When all the birds are faint with the  
hot sun,

And hide in cooling trees, a voice will  
run

From hedge to hedge about the new-  
mown mead;

That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the  
lead

In summer luxury,—he has never done  
With his delights, for when tired out  
with fun,

He rests at ease beneath some pleasant  
weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never:

On a lone winter evening, when the  
frost

Has wrought a silence, from the stove  
there shrills

The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing  
ever,

And seems to one in drowsiness half  
lost,

The Grasshopper's among some grassy  
hills.

Happy is  
England!



Happy is England! I could be content .  
To see no other verdure than its own  
To feel no other breezes than are  
blown

Through its tall woods with high ro-  
mances blent

Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment  
For skies Italian and an inward groan  
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne  
And half forget what world or worldling  
meant

Happy is England sweet her artless  
daughters

Enough their simple loveliness for me  
Enough their whitest arms in silence  
clinging

Yet do I often warmly burn to see  
Beauties of deeper glance and hear  
their singing  
And float with them about the summer  
waters

## To Kosciusko

Good Kosciusko! thy great name alone  
Is a full harvest whence to reap high  
feeling;

It comes upon us like the glorious  
pealing  
Of the wide spheres—an everlasting tone.  
And now it tells me, that in worlds un-  
known,

The names of heroes burst from clouds  
concealing,  
And change to harmonies, for ever  
stealing  
Through cloudless blue, and round each  
silver throne.

It tells me too, that on a happy day,  
When some good spirit walks upon  
the earth,  
Thy name with Alfred's, and the  
great of yore  
Gently commingling, gives tremendous  
birth

To a loud hymn, that sounds far, far  
away  
To where the great God lives for  
evermore.

Written before  
Re-reading  
"King Lear"



O Golden-tongued Romance with serene  
lute!

Fair plumed Syren! Queen of far  
away!

Leave melodizing on this wintry day.  
Shut up thine olden volume, and be  
mute,

Adieu! for once again the fierce dispute,  
Betwixt Hell torment and impassioned  
clay

Must I burn through; once more must  
I assay

The bitter sweet of this Shakesperian  
fruit.

Chief Poet! and ye clouds of Albion,  
Begetters of our deep eternal theme,  
When I am through the old oak forest  
gone,

Let me not wander in a barren dream,  
But when I am consumed with the Fire,  
Give me new Phoenix-wings to fly at my  
desire.

## To Ailsa Rock



Hearken, thou craggy ocean pyramid!

Give answer from thy voice, the sea-  
fowl's screams!

When were thy shoulders mantled in  
huge streams?

When from the sun was thy broad fore-  
head hid?

How long is't since the mighty power  
bid

Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom  
dreams?

Sleep in the lap of thunder or sun-  
beams,

Or when gray clouds are thy cold cover-  
lid?

Thou answerest not, for thou art dead  
asleep!

Thy life is but two dead eternities,  
The last in air, the former in the deep:

First with the whales, last with the  
eagle-skies!

Drowned wast thou till an earthquake  
made thee steep,

Another cannot wake thy giant size.

Oh! how I love!



Oh! how I love, on a fair summer's eve,  
When streams of light pour down the  
golden west,

And on the balmy zephyrs tranquil rest  
The silver clouds, far—far away to leave  
All meaner thoughts, and take a sweet  
reprieve

From little cares; to find, with easy  
quest,

A fragrant wild, with Nature's beauty  
drest,

And there into delight my soul deceive,  
There warm my breast with patriotic lore,  
Musing on Milton's fate—on Sidney's  
bier—

Till their stern forms before my mind  
arise:

Perhaps on wing of Poesy upsoar,  
Full often dropping a delicious tear,  
When some melodious sorrow spells  
mine eyes.

## Sonnet

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK  
SPACE OF A LEAF AT END  
OF CHAUCER'S TALE OF  
"THE FLOWRE AND THE  
LEFE"



This pleasant tale is like a little copse:  
The honied lines do freshly interlace,  
To keep the reader in so sweet a place,  
So that he here and there full-hearted  
stops;  
And oftentimes he feels the dewy drops  
Come cool and suddenly against his  
face,  
And, by the wandering melody, may  
trace  
Which way the tender-legged linnet hops.  
Oh! what a power hath white simplicity!  
What mighty power has this gentle  
story!  
I, that do ever feel athirst for glory,  
Could at this moment be content to lie  
Meekly upon the grass, as those whose  
sobblings  
Were heard of none beside the mourn-  
ful robins.

## The Gentle South



After dark vapours have oppressed our  
plains

For a long dreary season, comes a day  
Born of the gentle South, and clears  
away

From the sick heavens all unseemly  
stains.

The anxious month, relieved from its  
pains,

Takes as a long-lost right the feel of  
May,

The eyelids with the passing coolness  
play,

Like rose-leaves with the drip of summer  
rains.

And calmest thoughts come round us—as  
of leaves

'Budding—fruit ripening in stillness—  
autumn suns

Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves,—  
Sweet Sappho's cheek,—a sleeping infant's  
breath,—

The gradual sand that through an hour-  
glass runs,—

A woodland rivulet,—a Poet's death.



## On the Sea



It keeps eternal whisperings around  
Desolate shores, and with its mighty  
swell  
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till  
the spell  
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy  
sound.  
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,  
That scarcely will the very smallest  
shell  
Be moved for days from where it some-  
time fell,  
When last the winds of heaven were un-  
bound.  
Oh ye! who have your eyeballs vexed  
and tired,  
Feast them upon the wideness of the  
Sea;  
Oh ye! whose ears are dinned with  
uproar rude,  
Or fed too much with cloying melody,—  
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth,  
and brood  
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs  
quired!

## Fears of Death



When I have fears that I may cease to  
be

Before my pen has gleaned my teeming  
brain,

Before high-piled books, in charact'ry,

Hold like rich garner's the full-ripened  
grain;

When I behold, upon the night's starred  
face,

Huge cloudy symbols of a high ro-  
mance,

And feel that I may never live to trace

Their shadows, with the magic hand  
of chance;

And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!

That I shall never look upon thee more,

'Never have relish in the faery power

Of unreflecting love!—then on the shore

Of the wide world I stand alone, and  
think,

Till Love and Fame to nothingness do  
sink.

## To Homer

Standing aloof in giant ignorance,  
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,  
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance

To visit dolphin-coral in deep seas.  
So thou wast blind!—but then the veil  
was rent;

For Jove uncurtained Heaven to let  
thee live,

And Neptune made for thee a spermy  
tent,

And Pan made sing for thee his forest-  
hive;

Aye, on the shores of darkness there is  
light,

And precipices show untrodden green;  
There is a budding morrow in midnight;

There is a triple sight in blindness  
keen;

Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befell,  
To Dian, Queen of Earth and Heaven,  
and Hell.

Answer to a  
Sonnet by J.  
H. Reynolds,  
ending:—



"Dark eyes are dearer far  
Than those that mock the hyacinthine bell".

Blue! 'Tis the life of heaven,—the do-  
main  
Of Cynthia,—the wide palace of the  
sun,—  
The tent of Hesperus, and all his train,—  
The bosomer of clouds, gold, gray, and  
dun.  
Blue! 'Tis the life of waters—ocean  
And all its vassal streams. pools num-  
berless  
May rage, and foam, and fret, but never  
can  
Subside, if not to dark-blue native-  
ness.  
Blue! gentle cousin of the forest-green,  
Married to green in all the sweetest  
flowers—

## *ANSWER TO A SONNET*

Forget-me-not,—the bluebell,—and, that  
queen

Of secrecy, the violet: what strange  
powers

Hast thou, as a mere shadow! But how  
great,

When in an Eye thou art alive with fate!

To J. H. Reynolds            

O that a week could be an age, and we  
Felt parting and warm meeting every  
week,  
Then one poor year a thousand years  
would be,  
The flush of welcome ever on the cheek  
So could we live long life in little space,  
So time itself would be annihilate,  
So a day's journey in oblivious haze  
To serve our joys would lengthen and  
dilate  
O to arrive each Monday morn from Ind!  
To land each Tuesday from the rich  
Levant!  
In little time a host of joys to bind,  
And keep our souls in one eternal pant!  
This morn, my friend, and yester-evening  
taught  
Me how to harbour such a happy thought

## On Fame



### I

Fame, like a wayward girl, will still be  
coy

To those who woo her with too slavish  
knees,

But makes surrender to some thoughtless  
boy,

And dotes the more upon a heart at  
ease;

She is a Gipsej,—will not speak to those  
Who have not learnt to be content with-  
out her;

A Jilt, whose ear was never whispered  
close,

Who thinks they scandal her who talk  
about her;

A very Gipsej is she, Nilus-born,

Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar;

Ye love-sick Bards! repay her scorn for  
scorn;

Ye Artists love-lorn! madmen that ye  
are!

Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,  
Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

## On Fame



### II

You cannot eat your cake and have it too  
—*Proverb*

How fevered is the man who cannot look  
Upon his mortal days with temperate  
blood,

Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,  
And robs his fair name of its maiden-  
hood,

It is as if the rose should pluck herself,  
Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom,  
As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,  
Should darken her pure grot with muddy  
gloom,

But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,  
For winds to kiss and grateful bees to  
feed,

And the ripe plum still wears its dim  
attire,

The undisturbed lake has crystal space,  
Why then should man, teasing the world  
for grace,

Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?



## To the Nile



Son of the old moon-mountains African!  
Stream of the Pyramid and Crocodile!  
We call thee fruitful, and that very  
while

A desert fills our seeing's inward span.  
Nurse of swart nations since the world  
began,

Art thou so fruitful? or dost thou be-  
guile

Those men to honour thee, who, 'worn  
with toil,

Rest them a space 'twixt Cairo and  
Deccan?

O may dark fancies err! They surely do;  
'Tis ignorance that makes a barren waste

Of all beyond itself. Thou dost bedew  
Green rushes like our rivers, and dost  
taste

The pleasant sunrise. Green isles hast  
thou too,

And to the sea as happily dost haste.

## Ben Nevis



Read me a lesson, Muse, and speak it  
loud

Upon the top of Nevis, blind in mist!  
I look into the chasms, and a shroud  
Vaporous doth hide them,—just so much  
I wist

Mankind do know of hell; I look o'er-  
head,

And there is sullen mist,—even so much  
Mankind can tell of heaven; mist is  
spread

Before the earth, beneath me,—even such,  
Even so vague is man's sight of himself!  
Here are the craggy stones beneath my  
feet,—

Thus much I know that, a poor witless  
elf,

I tread on them,—that all my eye doth  
meet

Is mist and crag, not only on this height,  
But in the world of thought and mental  
might!





Birds of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth!  
Have ye souls in heaven too  
Double lived in regions new?  
Yes, and those of heaven commune  
With the spheres of sun and moon,  
With the noise of fountains wondrous,  
And the parle of voices thunderous,  
With the whisper of heaven's trees  
And one another, in soft ease  
Seated on Elysian lawns  
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns,  
Underneath large bluebells tented,  
Where the daisies are rose scented,  
And the rose herself has got  
Perfume which on earth is not,  
Where the nightingale doth sing  
Not a senseless, tranced thing,  
But divine melodious truth,  
Philosophic numbers smooth,  
Tales and golden histories  
Of heaven and its mysteries

## ODE

Thus ye live on high, and then  
On the earth ye live again;  
And the souls ye left behind you  
Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
Where your other souls are joying,  
Never slumbered, never cloying.  
Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
To mortals, of their little week;  
Of their sorrows and delights;  
Of their passions and their spites;  
Of their glory and their shame;  
What doth strengthen and what main.  
Thus ye teach us, every day,  
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth;  
Ye have souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new!

Lines on the  
Mermaid Tavern

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
Have ye tippled drink more fine  
Than mine host's Canary wine?  
Or are fruits of Paradise  
Sweeter than those dainty pies  
Of venison? O generous food!  
Drest as though bold Robin Hood  
Would, with his mad Marian,  
Sup and bowse from horn and can

I have heard that on a day  
Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
Nobody knew whither, till  
An astrologer's old quill  
To a sheepskin gave the story—  
Said he saw you in your glory,  
Underneath a new old sign  
Sipping beverage divine,  
And pledging with contented smack  
The Mermaid in the Zodiac

## *THE MERMAID TAVERN*

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

## Robin Hood



Not those days are gone away,  
And their hours are old and gray,  
And their minutes buried all  
Under the down trodden pall  
Of the leaves of many years  
\* Many times have Winter's shears,  
Frozen North, and chilling East  
Sounded tempests to the feast  
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,  
Since men knew nor rent nor leases

\*

No, the bugle sounds no more,  
And the twanging bow no more,  
Silent is the ivory shrill  
Past the heath and up the hill,  
There is no mid forest laugh,  
Where lone Echo gives the half  
To some wight, amazed to hear  
Jesting, deep in forest drear

On the fairest time of June  
You may go, with sun or moon,  
Or the seven stars to light you,  
Or the polar ray to right you,



## ROBIN HOOD

But you never may behold  
Little John, or Robin bold;  
Never one, of all the clan,  
Thrumming on an empty can  
Some old hunting ditty, while  
He doth his green way beguile  
To fair hostess Merriment,  
Down beside the pasture Trent;  
For he left the merry tale,  
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;  
Gone, the song of Gamelyn;  
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw  
Idling in the "grenè shawe":  
All are gone away and past!  
And if Robin should be cast  
Sudden from his tufted grave,  
And if Marian should have  
Once again her forest days,  
She would weep, and he would craze:  
He would swear; for all his oaks,  
Fallen beneath the dockyard strokes,  
Have rotted on the briny seas;  
She would weep that her wild bees  
Sang not to her—strange! that honey  
Can't be got without hard money!

## *ROBIN HOOD*

So it is: yet let us sing,  
Honour to the old bow-string!  
Honour to the bugle-horn!  
Honour to the woods unshorn!  
Honour to the Lincoln green!  
Honour to the archer keen!  
Honour to tight Little John,  
And the horse he rode upon!  
Honour to bold Robin Hood,  
Sleeping in the underwood!  
Honour to Maid Marian,  
And to all the Sherwood-clan!  
Though their days have hurried by  
Let us two a burden try .

## Fancy



Ever let the Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home:  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;  
Then let winged Fancy wander  
Through the thought still spread beyond  
her;

Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.  
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,  
And the enjoying of the Spring  
Fades as does its blossoming;  
Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,  
Blushing through the mist and dew,  
Cloys with tasting: What do then?  
Sit thee by the ingle, when  
The sear faggot blazes bright,  
Spirit of a winter's night;  
When the soundless earth is muffled,  
And the caked snow is shuffled  
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;  
When the Night doth meet the Noon  
In a dark conspiracy  
To banish Even from her sky.

# FANCY

Sit thee there, and send abroad,  
 With a mind self-overflowed,  
 Fancy, high-commissioned — send her!  
 She has vassals to attend her  
 She will bring, in spite of frost,  
 Beauties that the earth hath lost,  
 She will bring thee, all together,  
 All delights of summer weather,  
 All the buds and bells of May,  
 From dewy sward or thorny spray,  
 All the heaped Autumn's wealth,  
 With a still, mysterious stealth  
 \*She will mix these pleasures up  
 Like three fit wines in a cup,  
 And thou shalt quaff it — thou shalt hear  
 Distant harvest-carols clear,  
 Rustle of the reaped corn,  
 Sweet birds antheming the morn  
 And, in the same moment — hark!  
 'Tis the early April lark,  
 Or the rooks, with busy caw,  
 Foraging for sticks and straw  
 Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
 The daisy and the marigold,  
 White-plumed lilies, and the first  
 Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst,  
 Shaded hyacinth, always  
 Sapphire queen of the mid-May  
 And every leaf, and every flower  
 Pearled with the self-same shower.

## FANCY

Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep  
Meagre from its celled sleep;  
And the snake all winter-thin  
Cast on sunny bank its skin;  
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see  
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree  
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest  
Quiet on her mossy nest;  
Then the hurry and alarm  
When the beehive casts its swarm;  
Acorns ripe down-pattering,  
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
Everything is spoilt by use:  
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,  
Too much gazed at? Where's the maid  
Whose lip mature is ever new?  
Where's the eye, however blue,  
Doth not weary? Where's the face  
One would meet in every place?  
Where's the voice, however soft,  
One would hear so very oft?  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.  
Let, then, winged Fancy find  
Thee a mistress to thy mind:  
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,  
Ere the God of Torment taught her  
How to frown and how to chide!

## *FANCY*

. . . . Break the mesh  
Of the Fancy's silken leash;  
Quickly break her prison-string,  
And such joys as these she'll bring.  
Let the winged Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home.

## Song—The Dove



I had a dove, and the sweet dove died!

And I have thought it died of grieving;  
O, what could it grieve for? its feet were  
tied

With a single thread of my own hand's  
weaving;

Sweet little red feet! why should you die?  
Why should you leave me, sweet bird!  
why?

You lived alone in the forest tree,  
Why, pretty thing! would you not live  
with me?

I kissed you oft, and gave you white  
peas;

Why not live sweetly, as in the green  
trees?

## Asleep

Asleep! O sleep a little while, white  
    pearl!  
And let me kneel, and let me pray to  
    thee,  
And let me call Heaven's blessing on  
    thine eyes,  
And let me breathe into the happy air  
That doth enfold and touch thee all  
    about  
Vows of my slavery, my giving up,  
My sudden adoration, my great love!



## Song of Four Fairies

FIRE, AIR, EARTH, AND WATER—  
SALAMANDER, ZEPHYR,  
DUSKETHA, AND BREAMA

*Salamander.* Happy, happy glowing fire!

*Zephyr.* Fragrant air! delicious light!

*Dusketha.* Let me to my glooms retire!

*Breama.* I to green-weed rivers bright!

*Sal.* Happy, happy glowing fire!

Dazzling bowers of soft retire,

Ever let my nourished wing,

Like a bat's, still wandering,

Faintless fan your fiery spaces,

Spirit sole in deadly places.

In unhaunted roar and blaze,

Open eyes that never daze,

Let me see the myriad shapes

Of men, and beasts, and fish, and apes,

Portrayed in many a fiery den,

And wrought by spumy bitumen.

On the deep intenser roof,

Arched every way aloof,

## SONG OF FOUR FAIRIES

Let me breathe upon their skies,  
And anger their live tapestries;  
Free from cold and every care  
Of chilly rain and shivering air.

*Zep.* Spirit of Fire! away! away!  
Or your very roundelay  
Will sear my plumage newly budded  
From its quilled sheath, all studded  
With the self-same dews that fell  
On the May-gate like Asphodel  
Spirit of Fire—away! away!

*Bre* Spirit of Fire—away! away!  
Zephyr, blue-eyed fairy, turn,  
And see my cool sedge-buried urn,  
Where it rests its mossy brim  
'Mid water-mint and cresses dim,  
And the flowers, in sweet troubles,  
Lift their eyes above the bubbles,  
Like our Queen, when she would please  
To sleep, and Oberon *will* tease—  
Love me, blue-eyed Fairy! true,  
Soothly I am sick for you

*Zep* Gentle Breama! by the first  
Violet young nature nurst,  
I will bathe myself with thee,  
So you sometimes follow me  
To my home, far, far in west,  
Beyond the nimble-wheeled quest  
Of the golden-browed sun:

## SONG OF FOUR FAIRIES

Come with me, o'er tops of trees,  
To my fragrant palaces,  
Where they ever floating are  
Beneath the cherish of a star  
Called Vesper, who with silver veil  
Ever hides his brilliance pale,  
Ever gently-drowsed doth keep  
Twilight for the Fayes to sleep.  
Fear not that your watery hair  
Will thirst in drouth; angiets there;  
Clouds of stored summer rains  
Thou shalt taste, before the stains  
Of the mountain soil they take,  
And too unlucent for thee make.  
I love thee, crystal Fairy, true!  
Sooth I am as sick for you!

*Sal.* Out, ye aguish Fairies, out!  
Chilly lovers, what a rout  
Keep ye with your frozen breath,  
Colder than the mortal death!  
Adder-eyed Dusketha, speak!  
Shall we leave these, and go seek.  
In the earth's wide entrails old  
Couches warm as theirs are cold?  
O for a fiery gloom and thee,  
Dusketha, so enchantingly  
Freckle-winged and lizard-sided!

*Dus.* By thee, Sprite, will I be guided!  
I care not for cold or heat;  
Frost and flame, or sparks, or sleet

## SONG OF FOUR FAIRIES

my essence are the same,  
 I honour more the flame  
 of Fire, I follow thee  
 wheresoever it may be,—  
 through torrid spouts and fountains,  
 beneath earth-quaked mountains,  
 at thy supreme desire,  
 which the very pulse of fire  
 in my bare unlidded eyes  
 O! Sweet Dusketh! paradise!  
 ye icy Spirits, fly! \*  
 O! airy creatures of the sky!  
 O! Breathe upon them, fiery sprite!  
 O! } Away! away to our delight!  
 O! }  
 O! Go, feed on icicles while we  
 bedded in tongue-flames will be  
 O! Lead me to those feverous glooms  
 of Fire!  
 O! Me to the blooms,  
 O! eye-eyed Zephyr, of those flowers  
 O! in the west where the May-clouds  
 lowers,  
 O! the beams of still Vesper, when winds  
 are all wist,  
 O! shed thro' the run and the mild  
 mist,  
 O! in twilight your floating bowers

“I Stood Tip-  
toe upon a  
Little Hill”



“Places of nestling green for poets made.”---  
*Story of Rimini.*

I stood tiptoe upon a little hill,  
The air was cooling, and so very still,  
That the sweet buds which with a modest  
    pride  
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,  
Their scanty leaved, and finely tapering  
    stems,  
Had not yet lost those starry diadems  
Caught from the early sobbing of the  
    morn.  
The clouds were pure and white as flocks  
    new shorn,  
And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly  
    they slept  
On the blue fields of heaven, and then  
    there crept  
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,  
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves:

"UPON A LITTLE HILL"

For not the faintest motion could be seen  
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the  
green.

There was wide wand'ring for the greediest  
eye,

To peer about upon variety;

Far round the horizon's crystal air to  
skim,

And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim;

To picture out the quaint, and curious  
bending

Of a fresh woodland alley, never ending;

Or by the bowery clefts, and leafy shelves,

Guess where the jaunty streams refresh  
themselves.

I gazed awhile, and felt as light, and free

As though the fanning wings of Mercury

Had played upon my heels I was light-  
hearted,

And many pleasures to my vision started;

So I straightway began to pluck a posy

Of luxuries bright, milky, soft and rosy.

A bush of May flowers with the bees  
about them;

Ah, sure no tasteful nook would be with-  
out them!

And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,

And let long grass grow round the roots  
to keep them

"I STOOD TIPTOE

Moist, cool and green; and shade the  
violets,  
That they may bind the moss in leafy  
nets;  
A filbert hedge with wild briar over-  
twined,  
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft  
wind  
Upon their summer thrones; there too  
should be  
The frequent chequer of a youngling  
tree,  
That with a score of light green brethren  
shoots  
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots:  
Round which is heard a spring-head of  
clear waters  
Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters,  
The spreading bluebells: it may haply  
mourn  
That such fair clusters should be rudely  
torn  
From their fresh beds, and scattered  
thoughtlessly  
By infant hands, left on the path to die.

Open afresh your round of starry folds,  
Ye ardent marigolds!

• UPON A LITTLE HILL' •

Dry up the moisture from your golden  
lids,  
For great Apollo bids  
That in these days your praises should be  
sung  
On many harps which he has lately  
strung,  
And when again your dewiness he kisses,  
Tell him I have you in my world of  
blisses  
So haply when I rove in some far vale,  
His mighty voice may come upon the  
gale

Here are sweet peas on tiptoe for a  
flight  
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate  
white  
And taper fingers catching at all things  
To bind them all about with tiny rings

Linger awhile upon some bending plants  
That lean against a streamlet's rushy  
banks  
And watch intently Nature's gentle doings  
They will be found softer than ringdoves  
cooings  
How silent comes the water round that  
bend!

Not the minutest whisper does it send



*"I STOOD TIPTOE*

To the o'erhanging salallows: blades of  
grass

Slowly across the chequered shadows pass.

Why, you might read two sonnets, ere  
they reach

To where the hurrying freshnesses aye  
preach

A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds;

Where swarms of minnows show their  
little heads,

Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the  
streams,

To taste the luxury of sunny beams

Tempered with coolness. How they ever  
wrestle

With their own sweet delight, and ever  
nestle

Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand!

If you but scantily hold out the hand,

That very instant not one will remain;

But turn your eye, and they are there  
again.

The ripples seem right glad to reach  
those cresses,

And cool themselves among the emerald  
tresses;

The while they cool themselves, they fresh-  
ness give,

And moisture, that the bowery green may  
live;

•  
*UPON A LITTLE HILL*

So keeping up an interchange of favours,  
Like good men in the truth of their be-  
haviours

Sometimes goldfinches one by one will  
drop

From low-hung branches, little space  
they stop;

• But sip, and twitter, and their feathers  
sleek;

Then off at once, as in a wanton frolic  
Or perhaps, to show their black and golden  
wings,

Pausing upon their yellow flutterings  
Were I in such a place, I sure should  
pray

That nought less sweet might call my  
thoughts away,

Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown  
Fanning away the dandelion's down,

Than the light music of her nimble toes  
Pattling against the sord as she goes

How she would start, and blush, thus to  
be caught

Playing in all her innocence of thought  
O let me lead her gently o'er the brook,  
Watch her half-smiling lips, and down-  
ward look;

O let me for one moment touch her wrist;  
Let me one moment to her breathing  
list,

## "I STOOD TIPTOE

And as she leaves me may she often turn  
Her fair eyes looking through her locks  
auburne.

What next? A tuft of evening primroses,  
O'er which the mind may hover till it  
dozes;

O'er which it well might take a pleasant  
sleep,

But that 'tis ever startled by the leap  
Of buds into ripe flowers; or by the flit-  
ting

Of divers moths, that aye their rest are  
quitting;

Or by the moon lifting her silver rim  
Above a cloud, and with a gradual swin  
Coming into the blue with all her light.

O Maker of sweet poets, dear delight  
Of this fair world, and all its gentle  
livers;

Spangler of clouds, halo of crystal rivers,  
Mingler with leaves and dew and tum-  
bling streams,

Closer of lovely eyes to lovely dreams,  
Lover of loneliness, and wandering,  
Of upcast eye, and tender pondering!  
Thee must I praise above all other glories  
That smile us on to tell delightful stories.  
For what has made the sage or poet  
write

But the fair paradise of Nature's light?

## UPON A LITTLE HILL"

In the calm grandeur of a sober line,  
We see the waving of the mountain  
pine;

And when a tale is beautifully strid,  
We feel the safety of a hawthorn glade:  
When it is moving on luxurious wings,  
The soul is lost in pleasant smother-  
ings:

Fair dewy roses brush against our faces,  
And flowering lurches spring from diamond  
vases;

O'erhead we see the jessamine and sweet-  
briar,

And bloomy grapes laughing from green  
attire;

While at our feet, the voice of crystal  
bubbles

Charms us at once away from all our  
troubles:

So that we feel uplifted from the world,  
Walking upon the white clouds wreathed  
and curled.

So felt he, who first told how Psyche  
went

On the smooth wind to realms of wonder-  
ment;

What Psyche felt, and Love, when their  
full lips

First touched; what amorous and fond-  
ling nips

*"I STOOD TIPTOE*

They gave each other's cheeks; with all  
their sighs,  
And how they kissed each other's tremu-  
lous eyes:  
The silver lamp—the ravishment—the  
wonder—  
The darkness—loneliness—the fearful  
thunder;  
Their woes gone by, and both to heaven  
upflown,  
To bow for gratitude before Jove's throne.  
So did he feel, who pulled the boughs  
aside,  
That we might look into a forest wide,  
To catch a glimpse of Fauns, and Dry-  
ades,  
Coming with softest rustle through the  
trees;  
And garlands woven of flowers wild, and  
sweet,  
Upheld on ivory wrists, or sporting feet:  
Telling us how fair, trembling Syrinx  
fled  
Arcadian Pan, with such a fearful dread.  
Poor nymph—poor Pan—how he did weep  
to find  
Naught but a lovely sighing of the wind  
Along the reedy stream! a half-heard  
strain,  
Full of sweet desolation—balmy pain.

## UPON A LITTLE HILL"

What first inspired a bard of old to sing  
Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring?  
In some delicious ramble, he had found  
A little space, with boughs all woven  
round,

And in the midst of all, a clearer pool  
Than e'er reflected in its pleasant cool  
The blue sky, here and there serenely  
peeping

Through tendril wreaths fantastically  
creeping

And on the bank a lonely flower he  
spied,

A meek and forlorn flower, with naught  
of pride,

Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clear-  
ness,

To woo its own sad image into near-  
ness

Deaf to light Zephyrus it would not  
move,

But still would seem to droop, to pine, to  
love

So while the Poet stood in this sweet  
spot,

Some fainter gleamings o'er his fancy  
shot,

Nor was it long ere he had told the tale  
Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's  
bale

*"I STOOD TIPTOE*

Where had he been, from whose warm  
    head out-flew  
That sweetest of all songs, that ever new,  
That aye refreshing, pure deliciousness,  
Coming ever to bless  
The wanderer by moonlight? to him  
    bringing  
Shapes from the invisible world, unearthly  
    singing  
From out the middle air, from flowery  
    nests,  
And from the pillowy silkiness that rests  
Full in the speculation of the stars.  
Ah! surely he had burst our mortal bars;  
Into some wondrous region he had gone,  
To search for thee, divine Endymion!  
He was a Poet, sure a lover too,  
Who stood on Latinus' top, what time  
    there blew  
Soft breezes from the myrtle vale below;  
And brought, in faintness solemn, sweet,  
    and slow,  
A hymn from Dian's temple! while up-  
    swelling,  
The incense went to her own starry  
    dwelling.  
But though her face was clear as infant's  
    eyes,  
Though she stood smiling o'er the sacri-  
    fice,

## UPON A LITTLE HILL

The poet wept at her so piteous fate,  
Wept that such beauty should be desolate  
So in fine wrath some golden sounds he  
won,  
And gave meek Cynthia her Endymion

Queen of the wide air, thou most lovely  
queen  
Of all the brightness that mine eyes have  
seen!  
As thou exceedest all things in thy shine,  
So every tale does this sweet tale of thine  
O for three words of honey that I might  
Tell but one wonder of thy bridal night!

Where distant ships do seem to show  
their keels,  
Phœbus awhile delayed his mighty wheels,  
And turned to smile upon thy bashful  
eyes,  
Ere he his unseen pomp would solemnize  
The evening weather was so bright, and  
clear,  
That men of health were of unusual  
cheer,  
Stepping like Homer at the trumpet's call,  
Or young Apollo on the pedestal



*"I STOOD TIPTOE.*

And lovely women were as fair and warm  
As Venus looking sideways in alarm.  
The breezes were ethereal, and pure,  
And crept through half-closed lattices to  
cure

The languid sick; it cooled their fevered  
sleep,

And soothed them into slumbers full and  
deep.

Soon they awoke clear-eyed: nor burnt  
with thirsting,

Nor with hot fingers, nor with temples  
bursting:

And springing up, they met the wonder-  
ing sight

Of their dear friends, nigh foolish with  
delight;

Who feel their arms, and breasts, and  
kiss and stare,

And on their placid foreheads part the  
hair.

Young men and maidens at each other  
gazed

With hands held back, and motionless,  
amazed

To see the brightness in each other's eyes;  
And so they stood, filled with a sweet  
surprise,

Until their tongues were loosed in poesy.

Therefore no lover did of anguish die:

*UPON A LITTLE HILL."*

But the soft numbers, in that moment  
spoken,

Made silken ties, that never may be  
broken.

Cynthia! I cannot tell the greater blisses,  
That followed thine and thy dear shepherd's kisses:

Was there a poet born?—but now no  
more—

My wandering spirit must no farther  
roam

Specimen of  
an Induction  
to a Poem



Lo! I must tell a tale of chivalry;  
For large white plumes are dancing in  
mine eye.

Not like the formal crest of latter days:  
But bending in a thousand graceful ways;  
So graceful, that it seems no mortal hand,  
Or e'en the touch of Archimago's wand,  
Could charm them into such an attitude.  
We must think rather, that in playful  
mood,

Some mountain breeze had turned its  
chief delight,

To show this wonder of its gentle might.

Lo! I must tell a tale of chivalry;  
For while I muse, the lance points slant-  
ingly

Athwart the morning air: some lady  
sweet,

Who cannot feel for cold her tender feet,  
From the worn top of some old battle-  
ment

Hails it with tears, her stout defender  
sent:

## INDUCTION TO A POEM

And from her own pure self no joy dis-  
sembling,

Wraps round her ample robe with happy  
trembling

Sometimes when the good knight his  
rest would take,

It is reflected, clearly, in a lake,

With the young ashen boughs 'gainst  
which it rests

And the half-seen mossiness of linnets'  
nests

Ah! shall I ever tell its cruelty

When the fire flashes from a warrior's eye,

And his tremendous hand is grasping it,

And his dark brow for very wrath is  
knit?

Or when his spirit with more calm in-  
tent,

Leaps to the honours of a tournament,

And makes the gazers round about the  
ring

Stare at the grandeur of the balancing?

No, no! this is far off—then how shall I

Revive the dying tones of minstrelsy,

Which linger yet about lone Gothic arches,

In dark green ivy, and among wild  
larches?

How sing the splendour of the revelries

When butts of wine are drank off to the  
lees?

## *SPECIMEN OF AN*

And that bright lance, against the fretted  
wall,

Beneath the shade of stately banneral,  
Is slung with shining cuirass, sword, and  
shield?

Where ye may see a spur in bloody field.  
Light-footed damsels move with gentle  
paces

Round the wide hall, and show their  
happy faces,

Or stand in courtly talk by fives and  
sevens:

Like those fair stars that twinkle in the  
heavens.

Yet must I tell a tale of chivalry:

Or wherefore comes that knight so proudly  
by?

Wherefore more proudly does the gentle  
knight

Rein in the swelling of his ample might?

Spenser! thy brows are arched, open, kind,  
And come like a clear sunrise to my  
mind;

And always does my heart with pleasure  
dance,

When I think on thy noble countenance:

Where never yet was aught more earthly  
seen

Than the pure freshness of thy laurels  
green.

## INDUCTION TO A POEM

Therefore, great bard, I not so fearfully  
Call on thy gentle spirit to hover nigh  
My daring steps: or if thy tender care,  
Thus startled unaware,  
Be jealous that the foot of other wight  
Should madly follow that bright path of  
light

\* Traced by thy loved Libertas, he 'will  
speak,

And tell thee that my prayer is very meek,  
That I will follow with due reverence,  
And start with awe at mine own strange  
pretence.

Him thou wilt hear, so I will rest in  
hope

To see wide plains, fair trees and lawnny  
slope,

The morn, the eve, the light, the shade,  
the flowers;

Clear streams, smooth lakes, and over-  
looking towers

# Calidore



## A FRAGMENT

Young Calidore is paddling o'er the lake;  
His healthful spirit eager and awake  
To feel the beauty of a silent eve,  
Which seemed full loth this happy world  
to leave;

The light dwelt o'er the scene so lingeringly.

He bares his forehead to the cool blue sky,

And smiles at the far clearness all around,  
Until his heart is well-nigh overwound,  
And turns for calmness to the pleasant green

Of easy slopes, and shadowy trees that lean

So elegantly o'er the waters' brim  
And show their blossoms trim.

Scarce can his clear and nimble eyesight follow

The freaks and dartings of the black-winged swallow,

Delighting much to see it, half at rest,  
Dip so refreshingly its wings and breast

## CALIDORE

'Gainst the smooth surface, and to mark  
anon,  
The widening circles into nothing gone.

And now the sharp keel of his little boat  
Comes up with ripple, and with easy  
float,  
And glides into a bed of water-lilies:  
Broad-leaved are they and their white  
canopies  
Are upward turned to catch the heavens'  
dew.  
Near to n little island's point they grew;  
Whence Calidore might have the good-  
liest view  
Of this sweet spot of earth. The bowery  
shore  
Went off in gentle windings to the hoar  
And light blue mountains but no breath-  
ing man  
With a warm heart, and eye prepared to  
scan  
Nature's clear beauty, could pass lightly  
by  
Objects that looked out so invitingly  
On either side. These, gentle Calidore  
Greeted, as he had known them long be-  
fore:



The sidelong view of swelling leafiness,  
Which the glad setting sun in gold doth  
dress;  
Whence, ever and anon, the jay out-  
springs,  
And sails upon the beauty of its wings.

The lonely turret, shattered, and outworn,  
Stands venerably proud; too proud to  
mourn  
Its long-lost grandeur: fir-trees grow  
around,  
Aye dropping their hard fruit upon the  
ground.

The little chapel with the cross above  
Upholding wreaths of ivy; the white dove,  
That on the windows spreads his feathers  
light,  
And seems from purple clouds to wing  
its flight.  
Green tufted islands casting their soft  
shades  
Across the lake; sequestered leafy glades,  
That through the dimness of their twi-  
light show  
Large dock-leaves, spiral foxgloves, or  
the glow

## CALIDORE

Of the wild-cats eyes or the silvery  
stems  
Of delicate birch-trees, or long grass  
which hems  
A little brook —The youth had long been  
viewing  
These pleasant things, and heaven was  
bedewing  
The mountain flowers, when his glad  
senses caught  
A trumpet's silver voice Ah! it was  
fraught  
With many joys for him the warder's  
ken  
Had found white coursers prancing in  
the glen  
Friends very dear to him he soon will see  
So pushes off his boat most eagerly,  
And soon upon the lake he skims along,  
Deaf to the nightingale's first under song  
Nor minds he the white swans that  
dream so sweetly  
His spirit flies before him so completely  
And now he turns a jutting point of land,  
Whence may be seen the castle gloomy  
and grand  
Nor will a bee buzz round two swelling  
peaches,  
Before the point of his light shallop  
reaches

Those marble steps that through the  
water dip:

Now over them he goes with hasty trip,  
And scarcely stays to ope the folding  
doors:

Anon he leaps along the oaken floors  
Of halls and corridors.

Delicious sounds! those little bright-eyed  
things

That float about the air on azure wings,  
Had been less heartfelt by him than the  
clang

Of clattering hoofs; into the court he  
sprang,

Just as two noble steeds, and palfreys  
twain,

Were slanting out their necks with loos-  
ened rein;

While from beneath the threat'ning port-  
cullis

They brought their happy burthens.

What a kiss,

What gentle squeeze he gave each lady's  
hand!

How tremblingly their delicate ankles  
spanned!

Into how sweet a trance his soul was  
gone,

While whisperings of affection

## CALIDORE

Made him delay to let their tender feet  
Come to the earth, with an incline so  
    sweet  
From their low palfreys o'er his neck  
    they bent  
And whether there were tears of languish-  
    ment,  
Or that the evening dew had pearled  
    their tresses,  
He feels a moisture on his cheek and  
    blesses  
With lips that tremble, and with glisten-  
    ing eye  
All the soft luxury  
That nestled in his arms A dimpled  
    hand,  
Fair as some wonder out of fairy land,  
Hung from his shoulder like the droop-  
    ing flowers  
Of whitest Cassia, fresh from summer  
    showers  
And this he fondled with his happy cheek  
As if for joy he would no further seek,  
When the kind voice of good Sir Cleri-  
    mond  
Came to his ear, like something from  
    beyond  
His present being so he gently drew  
His warm arms, thrilling now with pulses  
    new,

## CALIDORE

From their sweet thrall, and, forward  
    gently bending,  
Thanked Heaven that his joy was never-  
    ending;  
While 'gainst his forehead he devoutly  
    pressed  
A hand Heaven made to succour the dis-  
    tressed;  
A hand that from the world's bleak pro-  
    montory  
Had lifted Calidore for deeds of glory.

Amid the pages, and the torches' glare,  
There stood a knight, patting the flowing  
    hair  
Of his proud horse's mane: he was withal  
A man of elegance, and stature tall:  
So that the waving of his plumes would  
    be  
High as the berries of a wild ash-tree,  
Or as the winged cap of Mercury.  
His armour was so dexterously wrought  
In shape, that sure no living man had  
    thought  
It hard, and heavy steel: but that indeed  
It was some glorious form, some splendid  
    weed,

## CALIDORE

In which a spirit new come from the  
skies

Might live, and show itself to human  
eyes.

'Tis the far-famed, the brave Sir Gondibert,  
Said the good man to Calidore alert;

While the young warrior with a step of  
grace

Came up, n courtly snile upon his face,  
And mailed hand held out, ready to greet  
The large-eyed wonder, and ambitious  
heat

Of the aspiring boy; who as he led  
Those smiling ladies, often turned his  
head

To admire the visor arched so gracefully  
Over a knightly brow; while they went by  
The lamps that from the high-roofed hall  
were pendent,

And gave the steel a shining quite tran-  
scendent.

Soon in a pleasant chamber they are  
seated;

The sweet-lipped ladies have already  
greeted

All the green leaves that round the window  
clamber,

To show their purple stars, and bells of  
amber.

## CALIDORE

Sir Gondibert has doffed his shining steel,  
Gladdening in the free and airy feel  
Of a light mantle; and while Clerimond  
Is looking round about him with a fond  
And placid eye, young Calidore is burning  
To hear of knightly deeds, and gallant  
spurning  
Of all unworthiness; and how the strong  
of arm  
Kept off dismay, and terror, and alarm  
From lovely woman: while brimful of  
this,  
He gave each damsel's hand so warm a  
kiss,  
And had such manly ardour in his eye,  
That each at other looked half-staringly;  
And then their features started into smiles  
Sweet as blue heavens o'er enchanted  
isles.

Softly the breezes from the forest came,  
Softly they blew aside the taper's flame;  
Clear was the song from Philomel's far  
bower:  
Grateful the incense from the lime-tree  
flower;  
Mysterious, wild, the far-heard trumpet's  
tone;  
Lovely the moon in ether, all alone:

## CALIDORE

Sweet too the converse of these happy  
mortals,  
As that of busy spirits when the portals  
Are closing in the west; or that soft  
humming  
We hear around when Hesperus is  
coming.  
Sweet be their sleep. . . . .



## Faery Songs



### I

Shed no tear! oh, shed no tear!  
The flower will bloom another year.  
Weep no more! oh, weep no more!  
Young buds sleep in the root's white core.  
Dry your eyes! oh, dry your eyes!  
For I' was taught in<sup>t</sup> Paradise  
To ease my breast of melodies—  
Shed no tear.

Overhead! look overhead!  
'Mong the blossoms white and red—  
Look up, look up. I flutter now  
On this flush pomegranate bough.  
See me! 'tis this silvery bill  
Ever cures the good man's ill.  
Shed no tear! oh, shed no tear!  
The flower will bloom another year.  
Adieu, adieu!—I fly, adieu!  
I vanish in the heaven's blue—  
Adieu! adieu!

## FAERY SONGS

### II

Ah! woe is me! poor silver-wing!  
That I must chaunt thy lady's dirge,  
And death to this fair haunt of spring,  
Of melody, and streams of flowery  
verge,—  
Poor silver-wing! ah! woe is me!  
That I must see  
These blossoms snow upon thy lady's pall!  
Go, pretty page, and in her ear  
Whisper that the hour is near.  
Softly tell her not to fear  
Such calm favonian burial!  
Go, pretty page! and soothly tell,—  
The blossoms hang by a melting spell,  
And fall they must ere a star wink thrice  
Upon her closed eyes,  
That now in vain are weeping their last  
tears  
At sweet life leaving, and these arbours  
green,—  
Rich dowry from the Spirit of the  
Spheres,—  
Alas! poor Queen!

## To Fanny



Physician Nature! let my spirit blood!

O ease my heart of verse and let me  
rest;

Throw me upon thy Tripod, till the flood  
Of stifling numbers ebbs from my full  
breast.

A theme! a theme! great Nature! give a  
theme;

Let me begin my dream.

I come—I see thee, as thou standest  
there!

Beckon me not into the wintry air!

Ah! dearest love, sweet home of all my  
fears,

And hopes, and joys, and panting  
miseries,—

To-night, if I may guess, thy beauty  
wears

A smile of such delight,

As brilliant and as bright,

As when with ravished, aching, vassal  
eyes,

Lost in soft amaze,

I gaze, I gaze!

## TO FANNY

Who now, with greedy looks, eats up my  
feast?

What stare outfaces now my silver moon?  
Ah! keep that hand unravished at the  
least,

Let, let the amorous burn—

But, pr'y thee, do not turn

The current of your heart from me so  
soon

Oh, save, in charity,

The quickest pulse for me

Save it for me, sweet love! though music  
breathe

Voluptuous visions into the warm air,  
Though swimming through the dance's  
dangerous wreath

Be like an April day,

Smiling and cold and gay,

A temperate lily, temperate as fur,

Then, Heaven! there will be

A warmer June for me

Why, this—you'll say, my Fanny! is not  
true

Put your soft hand upon your snowy side,  
Where the heart beats confess—'t is  
nothing new—

Must not a woman be

A feather on the sea,

## TO FANNY

Swayed to and fro by every wind and  
tide?

Of as uncertain speed  
As blow-ball from the mead?

I know it—and to know it is despair  
To one who loves you as I love, sweet  
Fanny!

Whose heart goes fluttering for you every-  
where,

Nor, when away you roam,  
Dare keep its wretched home,  
Love, love alone, his pains severe and  
many:

Then, loveliest! keep me free,  
From torturing jealousy.

Ah! if you prize my subdued soul above  
The poor, the fading, brief pride of an  
hour;

Let none profane my Holy See of love  
Or with a rude hand break  
The sacramental cake:

Let none else touch the just new-budded  
flower;

If not—may my eyes close,  
Love! on their last repose.

Lines to  
Fanny



What can I do to drive away  
Remembrance from my eyes? for they  
have seen,

\* Aye, an hour ago, my brilliant Queen!  
Touch has a memory O say, love, say,  
What can I do to kill it and be free  
In my old liberty?

When every fair one that I saw was fair  
Enough to catch me in but half a snare  
Not keep me there

When, howe'er poor or parti-coloured  
things,

My muse had wings,  
And ever ready was to take her course  
Whither I bent her force,  
Unintellectual, yet divine to me,—  
Divine I say!—What sea bird o'er the sea  
Is a philosopher the while he goes  
Winging along where the great water  
throes?

## LINES TO FANNY

How shall I do  
To get anew  
Those moulted feathers, and so mount  
    once more  
Above, above  
The reach of fluttering Love,  
And make him cower lowly while I soar?  
Shall I gulp wine? No, that is vulgarism,  
A heresy and schism,  
Foisted into the canon-law of love;—  
No,—wine is only sweet to happy men;  
More dismal cares  
Seize on me unawares,—  
Where shall I learn to get my peace  
    again?  
To banish thoughts of that most hateful  
    land,  
Dungeoner of my friends, that wicked  
    strand  
Where they were wrecked and live a  
    wrecked life;  
That monstrous region, whose dull rivers  
    pour  
Ever from their sordid urns unto the shore,  
Unowned of any weedy-haired gods;  
Whose winds, all zephyrless, hold scourg-  
    ing rods,  
Iced in the great lakes, to afflict mankind;  
Whose rank-grown forests, frosted, black  
    and blind,

## LINES TO FANNY

Would fright a Dryad; whose harsh-  
herbaged meads  
Make lean and lank the starved ox while  
he feeds;  
There bad flowers have no scent, birds  
no sweet song,  
And great unerring Nature once seems  
wrong.

O, for some sunny spell  
To dissipate the shadows of this hell!  
Say they are gone,—with the new dawn-  
ing light  
Steps forth my lady bright!  
O, let me once more rest  
My soul upon that dazzling breast!  
Let once again these aching arms be  
placed,  
The tender gaolers of thy waist!  
And let me feel that warm breath here  
and there  
To spread a rapture in my very hair,—  
O, the sweetness of the pain!  
Give me those lips again!  
Enough! enough! it is enough for me  
To dream of thee!



## Hymn to Apollo



And of the golden bow,  
And of the golden lyre,  
And of the golden hair,  
And of the golden fire,  
Charioteer  
Round the patient year,  
Where—where slept thine ire,  
When like a blank idiot I put on thy  
wreath,  
Thy laurel, thy glory,  
The light of thy story?  
Or was I a worm—too low crawling for  
death?  
O Delphic Apollo!

The Thunderer grasped and grasped,  
The Thunderer frowned and frowned,  
The eagle's feathery mane  
For wrath became stiffened—the sound  
Of breeding thunder  
Went drowsily under,  
Muttering to be unbound.  
O why didst thou pity, and for a worm?  
Why touch thy soft lute  
Till the thunder was mute?

## HYMN TO APOLLO

Why was I not crushed—such a pitiful  
germ?

O Delphic Apollo!

The Pleiades were up,

Watching the silent air;

The seeds and roots in Earth

Were swelling for summer fare;

The Ocean, its neighbour,

Was at its old labour,

When, *who—who did dare*

To tie for a moment thy plant round his  
brow,

And grin and look proudly,

And blaspheme so loudly,

And live for that honour, to stoop to thee  
now?

O Delphic Apollo!

## On a Lock of Milton's Hair



Chief of organic numbers!  
Old Scholar of the Spheres!  
Thy spirit never slumbers,  
But rolls about our ears  
For ever and for ever!  
O what a mad endeavour  
    Worketh he,  
Who to thy sacred and ennobled hearse  
Would offer a burnt sacrifice of verse  
    And melody!

How heavenward thou soundest,  
Live Temple of sweet noise,  
And Discord unconfoundest,  
Giving Delight new joys,  
And Pleasure nobler pinions!  
O where are thy dominions?

    Lend thine ear  
To a young Delian oath—ay, by thy soul,  
By all that from thy mortal lips did roll,  
And by the kernel of thy earthly love,  
Beauty in things on earth and things  
    above,  
    I swear!

## ON A LOCK OF MILTON'S HAIR

When every childish fashion  
Has vanished from my rhyme,  
Will I, gray gone in passion,  
Leave to an after-time  
Hymning and Harmony  
Of thee and of thy works, and of thy life,  
But vain is now the burning and the strife,  
Pangs are in vain, until I grow high-rise  
With old Philosophy,  
And mad with glimpses of futurity

For many years my offerings must be  
hushed,  
When I do speak, I'll think upon this  
hour,  
Because I feel my forehead hot and  
flushed,  
Even at the simplest vassal of thy power,  
A lock of thy *bright hair*,—  
Sudden it came,  
And I was startled when I caught thy  
name  
Coupled so unaware,  
Yet at the moment temperate was my  
blood—  
I thought I had beheld it from the flood!

Extract from  
an Opera



O! were I one of the Olympian twelve,  
Their godships should pass this into a  
law,—

That when a man doth set himself in toil  
After some beauty veiled far away,  
Each step he took should make his lady's  
hand

More soft, more white, and her fair cheek  
more fair;

And for each briar-berry he might eat  
A kiss should bud upon the tree of love,  
And pulp and ripen richer every hour,  
To melt away upon the traveller's lips.

. . . . .

## Ode to Apollo



In thy western halls of gold,  
When thou sittest in thy state,  
Bards, that erst sublimely told  
Heroic deeds, and sang of fate,  
With fervour seize their adamantyne lyres,  
Whose cords are solid rays, and twinkle  
radiant fires

Here Homer with his nervous arms  
Strikes the twanging harp of war,  
And even the western splendour warms  
While the trumpets sound afar  
But, what creates the most intense sur-  
prise,  
His soul looks out through renovated eyes

Then, through thy Temple wide, me-  
lodious swells  
The sweet majestic tone of Maro's  
lyre  
The soul delighted on each accent  
dwells,—  
Enraptured dwells, — not daring to  
respire,  
The while he tells of grief around a  
funeral pyre

## ODE TO APOLLO

'Tis awful silence then again;  
Expectant stand the spheres;  
Breathless the laurelled peers,  
Nor move, till ends the lofty strain,  
Nor move till Milton's tuneful thunders  
cease,  
And leave once more the ravished heavens  
in peace.

Thou biddest Shakespeare wave his  
hand,  
And quickly forward spring  
The Passions—a terrific band—  
And each vibrates the string  
That with its tyrant temper best accords,  
While from their Master's lips pour forth  
the inspiring words.

A silver trumpet Spenser blows,  
And, as its martial notes to silence  
flee,  
From a virgin chorus flows  
A hymn in praise of spotless Chastity.  
'Tis still! Wild warblings from the  
Æolian lyre  
Enchantment softly breathe, and trem-  
blingly expire.

## ODE TO APOLLO

Next thy Tasso's ardent numbers  
Float along the pleased air,  
Calling youth from idle slumbers,  
Rousing them from Pleasure's lair —  
Then o'er the strings his fingers gently  
move,  
And melt the soul to pity and to love

But when *Thou* joinest with the Nine,  
And all the powers of song combine,  
We listen here on earth  
The dying tones that fill the air,  
And charm the ear of evening fair,  
From thee, great God of Bards, receive  
their heavenly birth



# Written on May Day

FRAGMENT  
OF AN ODE

Mother of Hermes! and still youthful  
Maia!

May I sing to thee  
As thou wast hymned on the shores of  
Baiaë?

Or may I woo thee  
In earlier Sicilian? or thy smiles  
Seek as they once were sought, in Grecian  
isles,  
By bards who died content on pleasant  
sward,

Leaving great verse unto a little clan?  
O, give me their old vigour, and unheard  
Save of the quiet Primrose, and the span  
Of heaven and few ears,  
Rounded by thee, my song should die  
away

Content as theirs,  
Rich in the simple worship of a day.

## Nature's Child



[“I was led into these thoughts, my dear Reynolds, by the beauty of the morning operating on a sense of idleness. I have not read any books—the morning said I was right—I had no idea but of the morning, and the thrush said I was right—seeming to say, ]

O thou! whose face hath felt the Winter's  
wind,  
Whose eye hath seen the snow-clouds  
hung in mist,  
And the black elm-tops 'mong the freez-  
ing stars,  
To thee the Spring will be a harvest-  
time.  
O thou, whose only book hath been the  
light  
Of supreme darkness, which thou feddest  
on  
Night after night, when Phœbus was  
away,  
To thee the Spring shall be a triple  
morn  
O fret not after knowledge!—I have  
none,  
And yet my song comes native with the  
warmth.

## *NATURE'S CHILD*

O fret not after knowledge!—I have  
done,  
And yet the Evening listens. He who  
saddens  
At thought of idleness cannot be idle,  
And he's awake who thinks himself  
asleep.

# Hyperion

A FRAGMENT

## BOOK I

Deep in the shady sadness of a vale  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of  
    morn,  
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one  
    star,  
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
Still as the silence round about his hair,  
Forest on forest hung about his head  
Like cloud on cloud    No stir of air was  
    there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd  
    grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it  
    rest  
A stream went voiceless by, still deepen'd  
    more  
By reason of his fallen divinity  
Spreading a shade the Naiad 'mid her  
    reeds  
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips

## HYPERION

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks  
went,  
No further than to where his feet had  
stray'd,  
And slept there since. Upon the sodden  
ground  
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless,  
dead,  
Unsceptred; and his realmless eyes were  
closed:  
While his bow'd head seem'd listening to  
the Earth,  
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from  
his place:  
But there came one, who with a kindred  
hand  
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bend-  
ing low  
With reverence, though to one who knew  
it not.  
She was a Goddess of the infant world;  
By her in stature the tall Amazon  
Had stood a pigmy's height: she would  
have ta'en  
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck;  
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.  
Her face was large as that of Memphian  
sphinx,

## *HYPERION*

Pedestal'd haply in a palace-court,  
When sages look'd to Egypt for their  
lore

But oh! how unlike marble was that face  
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made  
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self  
There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun,  
As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear  
Was with its stored thunder labouring up  
One hand she press'd upon that aching  
spot

Where beats the human heart, as if just  
there,

Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain  
The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
She laid, and to the level of his ear  
Leaning with parted lips, some words  
she spake

In solemn tenour and deep organ tone  
Some mourning words, which in our  
feeble tongue

Would come in these like accents, O how  
frail

To that large utterance of the early  
Gods'

\* "Saturn, look up!—though wherefore,  
poor old King?

I have no comfort for thee, no, not one

## *HYPERION*

I cannot say, 'O wherefore sleepest thou?'  
For heaven is parted from thee, and the  
earth

Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God;  
And ocean too, 'with all its solemn noise,  
Has from thy sceptre pass'd; and all the  
air

Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.

Thy thunder, conscious of the new com-  
mand,

Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house;  
And thy sharp lightning in unpractised  
hands

Scorches and burns our once serene do-  
main.

O aching time! O moments big as years!  
All as ye pass swell out the monstrous  
truth,

And press it so upon our weary griefs  
That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
Saturn, sleep on:—O thoughtless, why  
did I

Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?

Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes?  
Saturn, sleep on! while at thy feet I  
weep."

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,  
Those green-robed senators of mighty  
woods,

## *HYPERION*

Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest  
stars,

Dream, and so dream all night without  
a stir,

Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies  
off

As if the ebbing air had but one wave  
So came these words and went, the while  
in tears

She touch'd her fair large forehead to the  
ground

Just where her falling hair might be out  
spread

A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet  
One moon with alteration slow, had shed  
Her silver seasons four upon the night,  
And still these two were postured motionless,

Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern,  
The frozen God still couchant on the  
earth,

And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet  
Until at length old Saturn lifted up  
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom  
gone,

• And all the gloom and sorrow of the  
• place,

And that fair kneeling Goddess, and then  
spake



## HYPERION

As with a palsied tongue, and while his  
beard

Shook horrid with such aspen-malady:

“O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,  
Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face;  
Look up, and let me see our doom in it;  
Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape  
Is Saturn's; tell me, if thou hear'st the  
voice

Of Saturn; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,  
Naked and bare of its great diadem,  
Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had  
power

To make me desolate? whence came the  
strength?

How was it nurtured to such bursting  
forth,

While Fate seem'd strangled in my ner-  
vous grasp?

But it is so; and I am smother'd up,  
And buried from all godlike exercise  
Of influence benign on planets pale,  
Of admonitions to the winds and seas,  
Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting,  
And all those acts which Deity supreme  
Doth ease its heart of love in. I am gone

Away from my own bosom: I have left  
My strong identity, my real self,  
*Somewhere between the throne. and where*

## HYPERION

Here on this spot of earth    Search, Thea,  
search!

Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them  
round

Upon all space    space starr'd, and lorn  
of light,

Space region'd with life-air, and barren  
void,

Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell

Search, Thea, search! and tell me if thou  
seest

A certain shape or shadow making way

With wings or chariot fierce to repossess

A heaven he lost erewhile it must—it  
must

Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be  
king

Yes, there must be a golden victory

There must be Gods thrown down and  
trumpets blown

Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival

Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,

Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir

Of strings in hollow shells, and there  
shall be

Beautiful things made new, for the sur-  
prise

Of the sky-children, I will give com-  
mand

Thea! Thea! Thea! where is Saturn? '

## HYPERION

This passion lifted him upon his feet,  
And made his hands to struggle in the  
air,

His Druid locks to shake and ooze with  
sweat,

His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.  
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing  
deep;

A little time, and then again he snatch'd  
Utterance thus:—"But cannot I create?  
Cannot I form? Cannot I fashion forth  
Another world, another universe,  
To overbear and crumble this to nought?  
Where is another chaos? Where?" That  
word

Found way unto Olympus, and made  
quake

The rebel three. Thea was startled up,  
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,  
As thus she quick-voice spake, yet full of  
awe.

— *archaic* .

"This cheers our fallen house: come to  
our friends,

O Saturn! come away, and give them  
heart;

I know the covert, for thence came I  
hither."

Thus brief; then with beseeching eyes  
she went

## *HYPERION*

With backward footing through the shade  
a space  
He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the  
way  
Through aged boughs, that yielded like  
the mist  
Which eagles cleave, upmounting from  
their nest

Meanwhile in other realms big tears  
were shed,  
More sorrow like to this, and such like  
woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of  
scribe  
The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison  
bound,  
Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,  
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's  
voice  
But one of the whole mammoth-brood  
still kept  
His sovereignty, and rule, and majesty,  
Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire  
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming  
up  
From man to the sun's God, yet unsecure  
For as among us mortals omens drear  
Fright and perplex, so also shudder'd he,

## HYPERION

Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated  
screech,

Or the familiar visiting of one

Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,

Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp;

But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,

5. Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace  
bright,

Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,

And touch'd with shade of bronzed obe-  
lisks,

Glared a blood-red through all its thou-  
sand courts,

Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries;

And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds

Flush'd angrily: while sometimes eagles'  
wings,

Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,

Darken'd the place; and neighing steeds  
were heard

Not heard before by Gods or wondering  
men.

Also, when he would taste the spicy  
wreaths

Of incense, breathed aloft from sacred  
hills,

Instead of sweets his ample palate took

Savour of poisonous brass and metal sick:

And so, when harbour'd in the sleepy  
west,

## *HYPERION*

After the full completion of fair day,  
For rest divine upon exalted couch,  
And slumber in the arms of melody,  
He paced away the pleasant hours of ease  
With stride colossal, on from hall to hall,  
While far within each aisle and deep recess,  
His winged minions in close clusters stood,  
Amazed and full of fear, like anxious men  
Who on wide plains gather in panting troops,  
When earthquakes jar their battlements  
and towers  
Even now, while Saturn, roused from icy  
trance,  
Went step for step with Thea through the  
woods,  
Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,  
Came slope upon the threshold of the  
west,  
Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew  
open  
In smoothed silence, save what solemn  
tubes,  
Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gave of  
sweet  
And wandering sounds, slow-breathed  
melodies,  
And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,

## *HYPERION*

In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye,  
That inlet to severe magnificence  
Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.

He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath;  
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond  
his heels,  
And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,  
That scared away the meek ethereal  
Hours  
And made their dove-wings tremble. On  
he flared,  
From stately nave to nave, from vault to  
vault,  
Through bowers of fragrant and en-  
wreathed light,  
And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades,  
Until he reach'd the great main cupola;  
There standing fierce beneath, he stamp'd  
his foot,  
And from the basements deep to the high  
towers  
Jarr'd his own golden region; and before  
The quavering thunder thereupon had  
ceased,  
His voice leapt out, despite of godlike  
curb,  
To this result: "O dreams of day and  
night!  
O monstrous forms! O effigies of pain!

## *HYPERION*

O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom!  
O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded  
pools!

Why do I know ye? why have I seen  
ye? why

Is my eternal essence thus distraught  
To see and to behold these horrors  
new?

Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall?

Am I to leave this haven of my rest,

This cradle of my glory this soft clime,

This calm luxuriance of blissful light,

These crystalline pavilions, and pure fanes,

Of all my lucent empire? It is left

Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine

The blaze, the splendour, and the sym-  
metry,

I cannot see—but darkness, death and  
darkness

Even here, into my centre of repose,

The shady visions come to domineer,

Insult, and blind, and stifle up my pomp—

Fall!—No, by Tellus and her briny robes!

Over the fiery frontier of my realms

I will advance a terrible right arm

Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel  
Jove,

And bid old Saturn take his throne again "

He spake, and ceased, the while a heavier  
threat



## *HYPERION*

Held struggle with his throat, but came  
not forth;  
For as in theatres of crowded men  
Hubbub increases more they call out  
“Hush!”  
So at Hyperion’s words the Phantoms  
pale  
Bestirr’d themselves, thrice horrible and  
cold;  
And from the mirror’d level where he  
stood  
A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.  
At this, through all his bulk an agony  
Crept gradual, from the feet unto the  
crown,  
Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular  
Making slow way, with head and neck  
convulsed  
From over-strained might. Released, he  
fled  
To the eastern gates, and full six dewy  
hours  
Before the dawn in season due should  
blush,  
He breathed fierce breath against the  
sleepy portals,  
Clear’d them of heavy vapours, burst  
them wide  
Suddenly on the ocean’s chilly streams.  
The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode

\*

## HYPRION

Each day from east to west the heavens  
through,  
Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds,  
Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and  
hid,  
But ever and anon the glancing spheres,  
Circles, and arcs, and broad-belted colure,  
Glow'd through, and wrought upon the  
muffling dark  
Sweet shaped lightnings from the nadir  
deep  
Up to the zenith—hieroglyphics old,  
Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers  
Then living on the earth, with labouring  
thought  
Won from the gaze of many centuries  
Now lost, save what we find on remnants  
huge  
Of stone, or marble swart, their import  
gone,  
Their wisdom long since fled Two wings  
this orb  
Possess'd for glory, two fair argent wings,  
Ever exalted at the God's approach  
And now, from forth the gloom their  
plumes immense  
Rose, one by one, till all outspread  
were,  
While still the dazzling globe maintain'd  
eclipse,

## *HYPERION*

Awaiting for Hyperion's command.  
Fain would he have commanded, fain  
took throne

And bid the day begin, if but for change.  
He might not:—No, though a primeval  
God:

The sacred seasons might not be dis-  
turbed.

Therefore the operations of the dawn  
Stay'd in their birth, even as here 't is  
told.

Those silver wings expanded sisterly,  
Eager to sail their orb; the porches wide  
Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night;  
And the bright Titan, frenzied with new  
woes,

Unused to bend, by hard compulsion bent  
His spirit to the sorrow of the time;  
And all along a dismal rack of clouds,  
Upon the boundaries of day and night,  
He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance  
faint.

There as he lay, the Heaven with its stars  
Look'd down on him with pity, and the  
voice

Of Cœlus, from the universal space,  
Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear:  
"O brightest of my children dear, earth-  
born

And sky-engender'd, Son of Mysteries!

## *HYPERION*

All unrevealed even to the powers  
Which met at thy creating! at whose joys  
And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,  
I, Cœlus, wonder how they came and  
whence,  
And at the fruits thereof what shapes  
they be,  
Distinct, and visible, symbols divine  
Manifestations of that beauteous life  
Diffused unseen throughout eternal space,  
Of these new-form'd art thou, oh brightest  
child!  
Of these, thy brethren and the Goddesses!  
There is sad feud among ye and rebellion  
Of son against his sire I saw him fall,  
I saw my first born tumbled from his  
throne!  
To me his arms were spread, to me his  
voice  
Found way from forth the thunders round  
his head!  
Pale wox I, and in vapours hid my face  
Art thou, too, near such doom? vague fear  
there is  
For I have seen my sons most unlike  
Gods  
Divine ye were created, and divine  
In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd  
Unruffled, like high Gods, ye lived and  
ruled

## HYPERION

Now I behold in you . fear, hope, and  
wrath;

Actions of rage and passion; even as  
I see them, on the mortal world beneath,  
In men who die. — This is the grief,  
O Son!

Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and  
fall!

Yet do thou strive; as thou art 'capable,  
As thou canst move about, an evident  
God,

And canst oppose to each malignant hour  
Ethereal presence:—I am but a voice;  
My life is but the life of winds and  
tides,—

No more than winds and tides can I  
avail:—

But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the  
van

Of circumstance; yea, seize the arrow's  
barb

Before the tense string murmur.—To the  
earth!

For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his  
woes.

Meantime I will keep watch on thy  
bright sun,

And of thy seasons be a careful nurse."—  
Ere half this region-whisper had come  
down

## *HYPERION*

Hyperion arose, and on the stars  
Lifted his curved lids, and kept them  
    wide  
Until it ceased, and still he kept them  
    wide  
And still they were the same bright,  
    patient stars  
Then with a slow incline of his broad  
    breast,  
Like to a diver in the pearly seas,  
Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore  
And plunged all noiseless into the deep  
    night

### BOOK, II

Just at the self-same beat of Time's wide  
    wings  
Hyperion slid into the rustled air,  
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad  
    place  
Where Cybele and the bruised Titans  
    mourn'd  
It was a den where no insulting light  
Could glimmer on their tears, where their  
    own groans  
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar  
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents  
    hoarse,  
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where

## *HYPERION*

Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks  
that seem'd

Ever as if just rising from a sleep,  
Forehead to forehead held their monstrous  
horns;

And thus in thousand hugest phantasies  
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.  
Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat  
upon,

Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge  
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assem-  
bled:

Some chain'd in torture, and some wan-  
dering.

Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareus,  
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyryon,  
With many more, the brawniest in assault,  
Were pent in legions of laborious breath;  
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep  
Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all  
their limbs

Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramp'd  
and screw'd;

Without a motion, save of their big  
hearts

Heaving in pain, and horribly convulsed  
With sanguine, feverous, boiling gurge of  
pulse.

Mnemosyne was straying in the world;  
Far from her moon had Phœbe wandered;

## HYPERION

And many else were free to roam abroad,  
But for the main, here found they covert  
drear.

Scarce images of life, one here, one there,  
Lay vast and edgeways, like a dismal  
cirque

Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,  
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,  
In dull November, and their chancel vault,  
The heaven itself, is blinded throughout  
night

Each one kept shroud, nor to his neigh-  
bour gave

Or word or look, or action of despair  
Creus was one, his ponderous iron mace  
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock  
Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and  
pined

Isapetus another, in his grasp,  
A serpent's plashy neck, its barbed tongue  
Squeezed from the gorge, and all its un-  
curl'd length

Dead, and because the creature could not  
spit

Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove  
Next Cottus prone he lay, chin upper-  
most,

As though in pain, for still upon the flint  
He ground severe his skull, with open  
mouth



And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him  
 Asia, born of most enormous Cal,  
 Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,  
 Though feminine, than any of her sons:  
 More thought than woe was in her dusky  
 face,

For she was prophesying of her glory;  
 And in her wide imagination stood  
 Palm-shaded temples, and high rival fanes  
 By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.  
 Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,  
 So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk  
 Shed from the broadest of her elephants.  
 Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelf,  
 Upon his elbow raised, all prostrate else,  
 Shadow'd Enceladus; once tame and mild  
 As grazing ox unworried in the meads;  
 Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,  
 He meditated, plotted, and even now  
 Was hurling mountains in that second  
 war,

Not long delay'd, that scared the younger  
 Gods

To hide themselves in forms of beast and  
 bird.

Not far hence Atlas; and beside him prone  
 Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd  
 close

Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap  
 Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.

In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet  
 Of Ops the queen all clouded round from  
     sight,  
 No shape distinguishable more than when  
 Thick night confounds the pine tops with  
     the clouds  
 And many else whose names may not be  
     told  
 For when the muse's wings are air-ward  
     spread,  
 Who shall delay her flight? And she  
     must chant  
 Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had  
     climb'd  
 With damp and slippery footing from a  
     depth  
 More horrid still Above a sombre cliff  
 Their heads appear'd, and up their stature  
     grew  
 Till on the level height their steps found  
     ease  
 Then Thea spread abroad her trembling  
     arms  
 Upon the precincts of this nest of pain,  
 And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's  
     face  
 There saw she direst strife, the supreme  
     God  
 At war with all the frailty of grief,  
 Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,

## *HYPERION*

Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all  
despair.

Against these plagues he strove in vain;  
for Fate

Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,  
A disanointing poison: so that Thea,  
Affrighted, kept her still, and let him  
pass

First onwards in, among the fallen tribe.

As with us mortal men, the laden heart  
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,  
When it is nighing to the mournful house  
Where other hearts are sick of the same  
bruise;

So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,  
Felt faint, and would have sunk among  
the rest,

But that he met Enceladus's eye,  
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at  
once

Came like an inspiration; and he shouted,  
"Titans, behold your God!" at which  
some groan'd;

Some started on their feet; some also  
shouted;

Some wept, some wail'd—all bow'd with  
reverence;

And Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,

## HYPERION

Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her fore-  
head wan,  
Her eyebrows thin and jet, and hollow  
eyes  
There is a roaring in the bleak-grown  
pines  
When Winter lifts his voice, there is a  
noise  
Among immortals when a God gives  
sign,  
With hushing finger, how he means to  
load  
His tongue with the full weight of utter-  
less thought,  
With thunder, and with music, and with  
*pomp*  
Such noise is like the roar of bleak grown  
pines,  
Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd  
world  
No other sound succeeds, but ceasing  
here,  
Among these fallen, Saturn's voice there-  
from  
Grew up like organ, that begins anew  
Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt  
short,  
Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly  
Thus grew it up — "Not in my own sad  
breast,

## *HYPERION*

Which is its own great judge and searcher  
out,

Can I find reason why ye should be thus:  
Not in the legends of the first of days,  
Studied from that old spirit-leaved book  
Which starry Uranus with finger bright  
Saved from the shores of darkness, when  
the waves

Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom;  
And the which book ye know I ever kept  
For my firm-based footstool:—Ah, infirm!  
Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent  
Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,—  
At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling,  
One against one, or two, or three, or all,  
Each several one against the other three,  
As fire with air loud warring when rain-  
floods

Drown both, and press them both against  
earth's face,

Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath  
Unhinges the poor world;—not in that  
strife,

Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read  
it deep,

Can I find reason why ye should be thus:  
No, nowhere can unriddle, though I  
search,

And pore on Nature's universal scroll  
Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,

## HYPERION

The first born of all shaped and palpable  
Gods,

• Should cower beneath what, in comparison,

Is untremendous might Yet ye are here,  
O'erwhelm'd, and spurn'd, and batter'd,  
ye are here!

O Titans, shall I say 'Arise!'—Ye groan  
Shall I say 'Crouch!'—Ye groan What  
can I then?

O Heaven wide! O unseen parent dear!  
What can I? Tell me, all ye brethren  
Gods,

How we can war, how engine our great  
wrath!

O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's  
ear

Is all a hunger'd Thou, Océanus,  
Ponderest high and deep, and in thy face  
I see, astonished, that severe content  
Which contes of thought and musing  
give us help!"

So ended Saturn, and the God of the  
Sea,

Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,  
But cogitation in his watery shades,  
Arose, with locks not oozy, and began,  
In murmurs, which his first endeavouring  
tongue

## *HYPERION*

Caught infant-like from the far-foamed  
sands.

“O ye, whom wrath consumes! who,  
passion-stung,

Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies!

Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears!

My voice is not a bellows unto ire.

Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring  
proof

How ye, perforce, must be content to  
stoop:

And in the proof much comfort will I give,

If ye will take that comfort in its truth.

↑ We fall by course of Nature's law, not  
force

Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn  
thou

Hast sifted well the atom-universe;

But for this reason, that thou art the  
King,

And only blind from sheer supremacy,

One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,

Through which I wander'd to eternal  
truth.

And first, as thou wast not the first of  
powers,

So art thou not the last; it cannot be.

Thou art not the beginning nor the  
end.

From chaos and parental darkness came

## *HYPÉRION*

Light, the first-fruits of that intestine  
broil,  
That sullen ferment, which for wondrous  
ends  
Was ripening in itself The ripe hour  
came,  
And with it light, and light engendering  
Upon its own producer forthwith touch'd  
The whole enormous matter into life  
Upon that very hour, our parentage,  
The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest  
Then thou first-born, and we the giant-  
race,  
Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous  
realms  
Now comes the pain of truth, to whom  
'tis pain,  
O folly! for to bear all naked truths,  
And to envisage circumstance, all calm  
That is the top of sovereignty Mark  
well!  
As Heaven and Earth are furer, fairer  
far  
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though  
once chiefs,  
And as we show beyond that Heaven and  
Earth  
In form and shape compact and beautiful  
In will, in action free, companionship



## *HYPERION*

And thousand other signs of purer life,  
So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
A power more strong in beauty, born of  
us

And fated to excel us, as we pass  
In glory that old Darkness: nor are we  
Thereby more conquer'd than by us the  
rule

Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull soil  
Quarrel with the proud forest it hath fed,  
And feedeth still, more comely than itself?  
Can it deny the chieftom of green groves?  
Or shall the tree be envious of the dove  
Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings  
To wander wherewithal and find its joys?  
We are such forest-trees, and our fair  
boughs

Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,  
But eagles golden-feather'd, who do tower  
Above us in their beauty, and must reign  
In right thereof; for 'tis the eternal law  
That first in beauty should be first in  
might:

Yea, by that law, another race may drive  
Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.  
Have ye beheld the young God of the  
Seas,

My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?  
Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along  
By noble winged creatures he hath made?

## *HYPERION*

I saw him on the calmed waters scud,  
With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,  
That it enforced me to bid sad farewell  
To all my empire farewell sad I took,  
And hither came, to see how dolorous  
fate

Had wrought upon ye, and how I might  
best

Give consolation in this woe extreme  
Receive the truth, and let it be your  
balm ”

Whether through posed conviction, or  
disdain,  
They guarded silence, when Oceanus  
Left murmuring, what deepest thought  
can tell?

But so it was, none answer'd for a space,  
Save one whom none regarded, Clymene  
And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,  
With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking  
mild,

Thus wording timidly among the fierce  
“ O Father! I am here the simplest voice,  
And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,  
And this thing woe crept in among our  
hearts,

There to remain for ever, as I fear  
I would not bode of evil, if I thought

## *HYPERION.*

So weak a creature could turn off the  
help

Which by just right should come of mighty  
Gods;

Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell  
Of what I heard, and how it made me  
weep,

And know that we had parted from all  
hope.

I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,  
Where a sweet clime was breathed from  
a land

Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and  
flowers.

Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief;  
Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth;  
So that I felt a movement in my heart  
To chide, and to reproach that solitude  
With songs of misery, music of our woes;  
And sat me down, and took a mouthed  
shell

And murmur'd into it, and made melody—  
O melody no more! for while I sang,  
And with poor skill let pass into the  
breeze

The dull shell's echo, from a bowery  
strand

Just opposite, an island of the sea,  
There came enchantment with the shift-  
ing wind

## HYPFRION

That did both drown and keep alive my  
ears  
I threw my shell away upon the sand  
And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was  
fill'd  
With that new blissful golden melody  
A living death was in each gush of  
sounds  
Each family of rapturous hurried notes,  
That fell one after one yet all at once,  
Like pearl beads dropping sudden from  
their string,  
And then another, then another strain,  
Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,  
With music wing'd instead of silent  
plumes,  
To hover round my head, and make me  
sick  
Of joy and grief at once Grief overcame  
And I was stopping up my frantic ears  
When, past all hindrance of my trembling  
hands  
A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all  
tune,  
And still it cried, 'Apollo! young Apollo!  
The morning bright Apollo! young Apollo!'  
I fled, it follow'd me and cried 'Apollo!'  
O Father, and O Brethren! had ye felt  
Those puns of mine! O Saturn, hadst  
thou felt,

## *HYPERION*

Ye would not call this too indulged tongue  
Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be  
heard!"

So far her voice flow'd on, like timor-  
ous brook  
That, lingering along a pebbled coast,  
Doth fear to meet the sea: but sea it met,  
And shudder'd; for the overwhelming voice  
Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath:  
The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves  
In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,  
Came booming thus, while still upon his  
arm

He lean'd; not rising, from supreme con-  
tempt.

"Or shall we listen to the over-wise,  
Or to the over-foolish giant, Gods?  
Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all  
That rebel Jove's whole armoury were  
spent,

Not world on world upon these shoulders  
piled,

Could agonize me more than baby-words  
In midst of this dethronement horrible.

Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans  
all.

Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile?  
Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm?

## H I P E R I O N

Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the  
Waves  
Thy scalding in the seas? What! have I  
roused  
Your spleens with so few simple words as  
these?  
O joy! for now I see ye are not lost  
O joy! for now I see a thousand eyes  
Wide glaring for revenge"—As this he  
said,  
He lifted up his stature vast, and stood  
Still without intermission speaking thus  
"Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to  
burn,  
And purge the ether of our enemies,  
How to feed fierce the crooked stings of  
fire  
And singe away the swollen clouds of  
Jove,  
Stifling that puny essence in its tent  
O let him feel the evil he hath done,  
For though I scorn Oceanus's lore,  
Much pain have I for more than loss of  
realms  
The days of peace and slumberous calm  
are fled,  
Those days all innocent of scathing war  
When all the fair Existences of heaven  
Came open eyed to guess what we would  
speak —

## *HYPERION*

That was before our brows were taught  
to frown,  
Before our lips knew else but solemn  
sounds;  
That was before we knew the winged  
thing,  
Victory, might be lost, or might be won.  
And be ye mindful that Hyperion,  
Our brightest brother, still is undisgraced—  
Hyperion, lo! his radiance is here!”

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,  
And they beheld, while still Hyperion's  
name  
Flew from his lips up to the vaulted  
rocks,  
A pallid gleam across his features stern:  
Not savage, for he saw full many a God  
Wroth as himself. He look'd upon them  
all,  
And in each face he saw a gleam of light,  
But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar  
locks  
Shone like the bubbling foam about a  
keel  
When the prow sweeps into a midnight  
cove.  
In pale and silver silence they remain'd,  
Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,  
Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,

## *HYPERION*

All the sad spaces of oblivion,  
And every gulf, and every chasm old,  
And every height, and every sullen depth,  
Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented  
streams

And all the everlasting cataracts,  
And all the headlong torrents far and  
near,

Mantled before in darkness and huge  
shade,

Now saw the light and made it terrible

It was Hyperion —a granite peak

His bright feet touch'd and there he  
stay'd to view

The misery his brilliance had betray'd

To the most hateful seeing of itself

Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,

Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade

In midst of his own brightness, like the  
bulk

Of Memnon's image at the set of sun

To one who travels from the dusking  
East

Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's  
harp,

He utter'd, while his hands, contempla-  
tive,

He press'd together, and in silence stood

Despondence seized again the fallen Gods

At sight of the dejected King of Day,



## HYPERION

And many hid their faces from the light:  
But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes  
Among the brotherhood; and, at their  
glare,

Uprose Iapetus, and Creus too,  
And Phorcus, sea-born, and together strode  
To where he tower'd on his eminence.

There those four shouted forth old Saturn's  
name;

Hyperion from the peak loud answer'd,  
"Saturn!"

Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods,  
In whose face was no joy, though all  
the Gods

Gave from their hollow throats the name  
of "Saturn!"

### BOOK III

Thus in alternate uproar and sad peace,  
Amazed were those Titans utterly.

O leave them, Muse! O leave them to  
their woes!

For thou art weak to sing such tumults  
dire:

A solitary sorrow best befits

Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.

Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt  
find

Many a fallen old Divinity

## HYPERION

Wandering in vain about, bewilder'd  
shores.

Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp,  
And not a wind of heaven but will breathe  
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute;  
For lo! 'tis for the Father of all verse.

Flush everything that hath a vermeil  
hue,

Let the rose glow intense and warm the  
air,

And let the clouds of even and of morn  
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills;  
Let the red wine within the goblet boil,  
Cold as a bubbling well; let faint-lipp'd  
shells,

On sands or in great deeps, vermilion  
turn

Through all their labyrinths; and let the  
maid

Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss  
surprised.

Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,  
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,  
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms,  
and beech,

In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest  
song,

And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath  
the shade:

Apollo is once more the golden theme!

## *HYPERION*

Where was he, when the Giant of the  
Sun  
Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his  
peers?

Together had he left his mother fair  
And his twin-sister sleeping in their  
bower,

And in the morning twilight wander'd  
forth

Beside the osiers of a rivulet,  
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.

The nightingale had ceased, and a few  
stars

Were lingering in the heavens, while the  
thrush

Began calm-throated. Throughout all the  
isle

There was no covert, no retired cave  
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of  
waves,

Though scarcely heard in many a green  
recess.

He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright  
tears

Went trickling down the golden bow he  
held.

Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he  
stood,

While from beneath some cumbrous  
boughs hard by

## HYPERION

With solemn step an awful Goddess came,  
And there was purport in her looks for  
him,

Which he with eager guess began to  
read

Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said  
"How camest thou over the unfooted sea?  
Or hath that antique mien and robed  
form

Moved in these vales invisible till now?  
Sure I have heard those vestments sweep-  
ing o'er

The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone  
In cool mid forest Surely I have traced  
The rustle of those ample skirts about  
These grassy solitudes, and seen the  
flowers

Lift up their heads, as still the whisper  
pass'd

Goddess! I have beheld those eyes before,  
And their eternal calm, and all that face  
Or I have dream'd"—"Yes" said the  
supreme shape,

"Thou hast dream'd of me, and awaking  
up

Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side  
Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers, all  
the vast

Unwearied ear of the whole universe  
Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth

## HYPERION

Of such new tuneful 'wonder. Is't not  
strange

That thou shouldst weep, so gifted? Tell  
me, youth,

What sorrow thou canst feel; for I am  
sad

When thou dost shed a tear: explain thy  
griefs

To one who in this lonely isle hath been  
The watcher of thy sleep and hours of  
life,

From the young day when first thy infant  
hand

Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till  
thine arm

Could bend that bow heroic to all times.  
Show thy heart's secret to an ancient  
Power

Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones  
For prophecies of thee, and for the sake  
Of loveliness new-born."—Apollo then,

With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,  
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious  
throat

Throbb'd with the syllables:—"Mnemo-  
syne!

Thy name is on my tongue, I know not  
how;

Why should I tell thee what thou so well  
seest?

## *HYPERION*

Why should I strive to show what from  
thy lips  
Would come no mystery? For me, dark,  
dark,  
And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes  
I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,  
Until a melancholy numbs my limbs,  
And then upon the grass I sit and moan  
Like one who once had wings --O why  
should I  
Feel cursed and thwarted, when the liege  
less air  
Yields to my step aspirant? why should I  
Spurn the green turf as hateful to my  
feet?  
Goddess benign! point forth some un-  
known thing  
Are there not other regions than this isle?  
What are the stars? There is the sun  
the sun!  
And the most patient brilliance of the  
moon!  
And stars by thousands! Point me out  
the way  
To any one particular beauteous star,  
And I will flit into it with my lyre  
And make its silvery splendour pant with  
bliss  
I have heard the cloudy thunder Where  
is power?

## HYPERION

Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity

Makes this alarum in the elements,

While I here idle listen on the shores

In fearless yet in aching ignorance?

O tell me, lonely Goddess! by thy harp,

That waileth every morn and eventide,

Tell me why thus I rave, about these groves!

Mute thou remainest—Mute? yet I can read

A wondrous lesson in thy silent face:

Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.

Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events, rebellions,

Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,

Creations and destroyings, all at once

Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,

And deify me, as if some blithe wine

Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,

And so become immortal."—Thus the God,

While his enkindled eyes, with level glance

Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast kept

Smiling with light upon Mnemosyne.

A wild commotion shook him, and made flush

## *HYPERION*

All the immortal fairness of his limbs:  
Most like the struggle at the gate of  
    death;  
Or liker still to one who should take  
    leave  
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang  
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce  
    convulse  
Die into life: so young Apollo anguish'd;  
His very hair, his golden tresses famed  
Kept undulation round his eager neck.  
During the pain Mnemosyne upheld  
Her arms as one who prophesied.—At  
    length  
Apollo shriek'd;—and lo! from all his  
    limbs  
Celestial . . .

. . . . .





